APRIL 1958

COMMENTARY

Pan-Arabism on the March?
Rival Blocs in the Middle East — RAY ALAN
Israel Weighs the New Challenge — NISSIM REJWAN
How We Beat the Machine — ROBERT LEKACHMAN
Jewish Messianism and the Idea of Progress — GERSHOM SCHOLEM
Can Europe Be United? — MAX BELOFF
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Cedars of Lebanon
The Levels of Love — ABRAHAM ISAAC KUK
On the Horizon
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The Study of Man
Freud and Scientific Truth—An Exchange — LILLIAN B. McCALL & HANS MEYERHOFF

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Lucy S. Dawidowicz — Dan Jacobson — Robert Brustein
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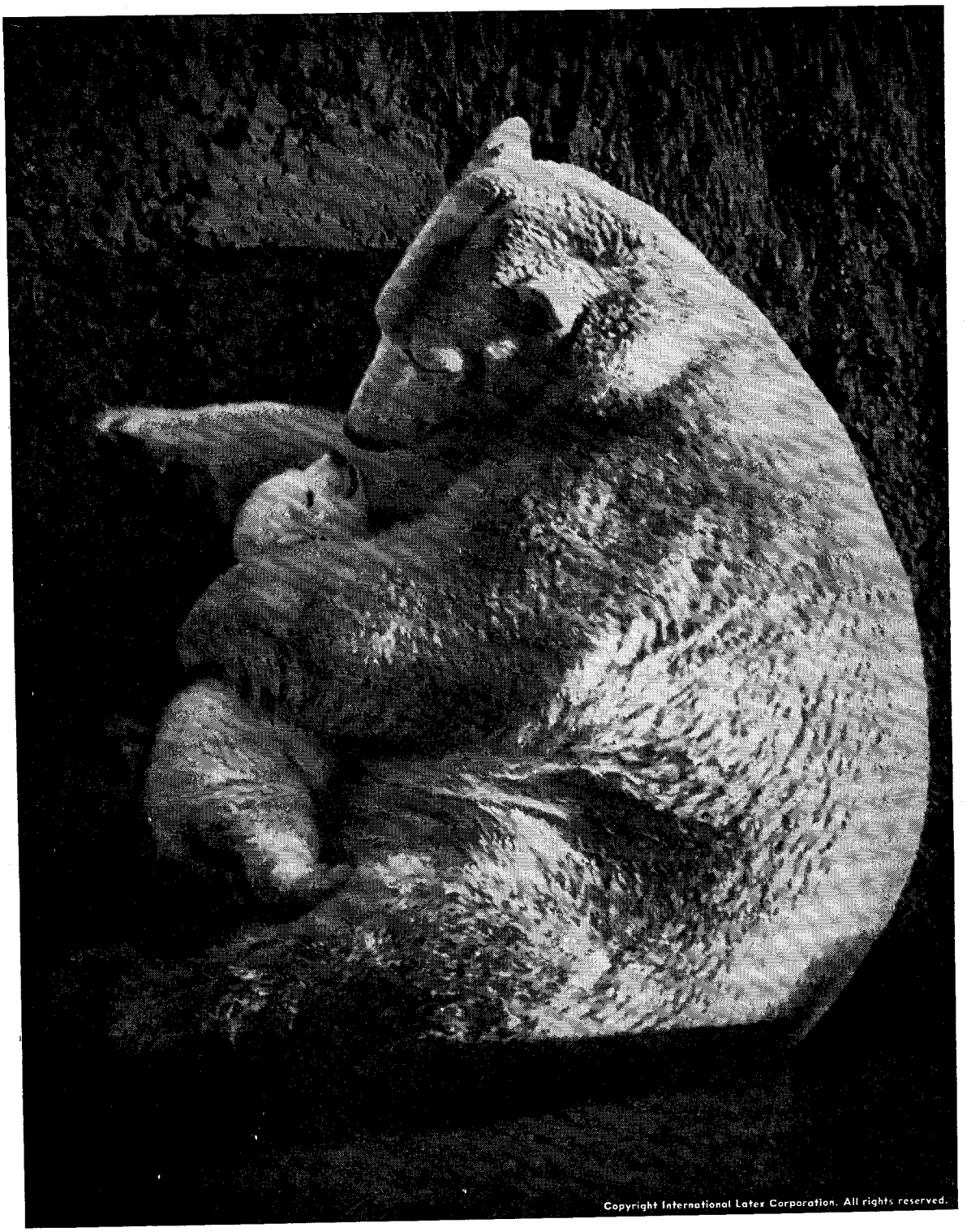

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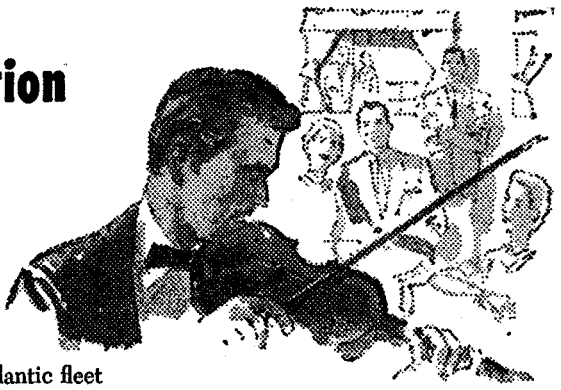

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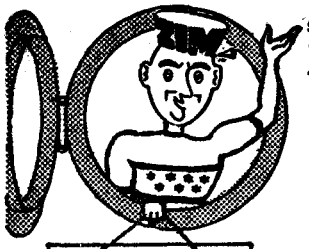

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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF

COMMENTARY

Freedom and Responsibility *Sidney Hook*

Professor Hook takes up a theme whose perennial importance to thinking people is currently underscored by the debate over juvenile delinquency and the responsibility of parents and society: how far is the individual answerable for his acts, and what are the philosophical grounds for exonerating him from blame?

The Bible of the Synagogue *Jakob J. Petuchowski*

An attempt, from the Reform point of view, to establish the importance of the Oral Law for modern Judaism. By a young scholar and rabbi.

Immigrants and the Image of America *Robert Gorham Davis*

Literary theory in the postwar period has grown fond of using the word "American" to mean the tradition of New England puritanism and the experience of the frontier, yet perhaps half the population of America today is composed of people whose ancestors came to this country no earlier than 1880. Mr. Davis illuminates the implications of this paradox.

A Visit to S'de Boker *Julius Horwitz*

An American writer visits the kibbutz S'de Boker for a few days and observes the embattled life of the Jewish pioneers.

Germany Twenty-five Years after Hitler *Sebastian Haffner*

A quarter-century has passed since the spring of 1933 when Hitler established his dictatorship in Germany. In casting a backward glance at the cataclysm, a noted German-born publicist gives his views on the present state of Germany's collective mind.

America: A Partial View *Norman Birnbaum*

After an absence of five years a young sociologist returns to America and notes the changes in the character of American public and private life.

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COMMENTARY

RIVAL BLOCS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Politics vs. Geography

RAY ALAN

THE most powerful political dynamic in Arab history has hitherto been centrifugal—an impulse toward fragmentation and separatism. It is an impulse induced by the very geography of the Near East. The rival magnetisms of the Nile and Euphrates valleys have been subversive of Levantine unity and stability since the birth of their respective civilizations. The great Syro-Arabian desert, with its Sinai extension, widens and complicates this basic schism and adds one major and three minor latitudinal barriers to intercourse. And within each division and subdivision of the region (Egypt alone excepted) geography has fostered a unique crop of disruptive local patriotisms and particularisms—in Arabian oases as in the remoter valleys and highlands of the Levant, northern and eastern Mesopotamia, and southern Arabia.

Syria, for example, is one of the Near Eastern countries in which news travels fastest. Yet so completely were some of its inhabitants cocooned in worlds of their own, even in an age of radio and air travel, that in 1943 British political officers discovered villages to which news of the outbreak of the Second World War, four years earlier, had still not penetrated. As recently as fifteen years ago many Levantines, when asked their nationality, would reply, not "I am Syrian," or whatever it might be, but "I am an Alawi" or a Mitwali, a Druze, a Kurd, etc., etc.; and some of these socio-religious communities are still only imperfectly integrated into Syrian and Lebanese political life. Thirty years ago Arabic had still not ousted Aramaic from the Kalamun hills just north of Damascus. According to Bertram Thomas, pre-Islamic paganism survived in some southern Arabian oases until about a century ago. Islam might have tamed geography and transformed the Near Eastern patchwork into a harmonious whole; but its propagation fell to men who, above all others, were the pawns of nature at its most capricious.

Indifferent to distances which still appall the average Westerner, contemptuous of frontiers, the Bedouin Arab seems, on first encounter, to be the very essence of which empire builders are made. His broad physical horizon has always been clouded, however, by his inability to evolve a commensurate political outlook—by his subjection to the fickle opportunism and centrifugalism inherent in Arabian tribal life. On the very

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WITH two rival Arab blocs confronting one another in the Middle East, genuine Arab union is further off than ever, in the opinion of an experienced British commentator whose writings are internationally known. RAY ALAN'S most recent contribution to this magazine appeared last December under the title "After the Syrian Fireworks."

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day of Mohammed's death, intertribal rivalry and clan strife within the tribes produced such wild confusion that the Prophet's body lay neglected, and only firm action by Omar (the future second Caliph) saved the young Islamic community from disintegrating overnight. Within a few years of Omar's death, the governor of Medina was calling for fresh campaigns against the infidel as the only means of averting internal anarchy and intertribal war. Whenever the impetus of conquest slackened, the tribes slithered off, beyond control, to carve out their own individual spheres of influence—at the expense, if no infidels were available, of their fellow Moslems. As Bertram Thomas has summed up: "The Arabs were a people without taste for discipline, without capacity for organisation, lacking stability. The marvelous expansion in the seventh and eighth centuries that carried their sway over an area as vast as the Roman Empire was followed immediately by a period of disintegration almost as rapid. . . . Political unity crumbled the moment the soldiers stopped marching: conquered territories split up, regional dynasties followed one another; and within three centuries political ascendancy had virtually passed almost everywhere to men of non-Arab blood."*

Thirteen hundred years after Mohammed, T. E. Lawrence discovered that Arab *mores* were unchanged. Their "idea of nationality," he wrote in *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, "was the independence of clans and villages, and their ideal of national union was episodic combined resistance to an intruder. Constructive policies, an organised state, an extended empire, were not so much beyond their sight as hateful in it." Arab unity? "A madman's notion," Lawrence told Liddell Hart.

UNIFYING trends have prevailed among the Arab and Arabized peoples only when assisted by external factors. The universalist aspects of Mohammed's teaching—which made possible the incorporation of the non-Arab Levantines, Egyptians, and Mesopotamians into the Islamic community—owed much to Judeo-Christian inspiration; and the extension of Islamic rule was directly favored by the political decrepitude of the Persian and Byzantine empires, debilitated by generations of military effort. When Arab centrifugalism asserted itself, a measure of Islamic unity was eventually restored only under the leadership of the sturdy non-Arab highlanders of the north and east. Saladin and his principal lieutenants were Kurds; and the architects of the most durable system of unification the Near East has ever known were Turks.

The so-called "Arab revolt" of 1917-18 was primarily the achievement of a small group of British officers, liberally supplied with gold. The 1943-45 negotiations which led to the formation of the Arab League were coaxed to fruition by Mr. Anthony Eden—and further assisted by Egyptian fears that Britain's main purpose was to weld Iraq, Syria, and Transjordan into a Hashemite-governed federation with which to isolate and outweigh Egypt. The British and Egyptian foreign offices both had hopes of "using" the Arab League—the former against rival Western influences, the latter against Britain—and both were to some extent satisfied. The Arab League tackled with gusto whatever negative tasks were set it, but failed to take a single significant positive step. Nevertheless, it served as a focus for the Pan-Arab emotion that had been welling up in Cairo, Damascus, and Baghdad since the collapse of Ottoman rule—partly as a reaction against Anglo-French domination and Zionism, partly in consequence of the spread of literacy. First the students of the region, then the newspaper-reading and radio-listening urban middle classes, rediscovered the heritage of medieval Islam and concluded that the prerequisite of a revival of past glories was political reunification. The more militant nationalists saw in unification a means of acquiring the necessary strength to crush Israel, to humiliate Britain and France, and to win a seat in the councils of the great.

*Bertram Thomas, *The Arabs* (London, 1938).

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By 1950 every major politician in the Arabic-speaking states was paying lip service to the Pan-Arab ideal. Old-gang politicos whose careers and fortunes had been built on the post-1920 partition of the region would recall with tears in their eyes that before the British and French moved in one could travel from Mecca to Istanbul without so much as an identity card. (All one needed was a bodyguard and a bag of gold.) No one on the fringes of power took Pan-Arabism seriously—the status quo offered too many pickings—but it made a handy political gimmick, an alternative to the "Let's-throw-the-Jews-into-the-sea" ploy, a red herring to draw across embarrassing discussions or lines of thought. The Iraqi Premier (as he then was) Abdel-Wahab Mirjan gave a textbook demonstration of its use on the eve of the recent Baghdad Pact conference in Ankara. Alarmed by the opposition to the Pact that had sprung up even in Baghdad's more or less hand-picked parliament, he assured deputies that his government's chief aim was to "exploit" this Western tie to the utmost to further "Arab causes." When this failed to satisfy, he declared that he personally had no intention of attending the Ankara conference: he was preparing, instead, a tour of Arab capitals in order to campaign for Arab unity. The house applauded and passed on to other business.

Thus when it became known in the latter half of January that Syrian and Egyptian representatives were negotiating some kind of federation or union of their two countries, the initial reaction of Levantine opinion was to shrug the news off as a propaganda stunt—and a Communist stunt at that. On January 20 the joint leadership of the Syrian and Lebanese Communist parties had issued a call for the establishment of a Syrian-Egyptian federation in order to create an Arab power capable of resisting the intrigues of Israel, "American imperialism," and "the U.S. oil cartels"; and it was the pro-Communist General Afif Bizri, chief of staff of the Syrian army, who had opened the negotiations on Syria's behalf. Bizri was apparently convinced that the assembled Baghdad Pact ministers and John Foster Dulles were hatching a plot to unseat the "left-nationalist" Syrian regime, but the most he wanted of Colonel Nasser was agreement to a federation of Syria and Egypt which would leave both states' internal regimes intact. The Syrian cabinet, however, mistrusted Bizri almost as much as Dulles, and secretly informed Nasser that it would prefer outright union and the placing of Bizri under an Egyptian commander-in-chief.

Thus, like the Arab League, the United Arab Republic of Egypt and Syria was the product of external stimuli and internal mistrust. Its emergence, in turn, panicked the Hashemite rulers into proclaiming their politically looser, but economically stronger, Federal Union of Jordan and Iraq. Effective Arab union—realization of the Pan-Arab dream—was as far away as ever.

NINETY-NINE-POINT-NINE-NINE is the sort of electoral percentage Stalin favored. It is above all a proclamation of political immaturity. Yet even if one deducts 10 or 15 per cent to allow for the enthusiasts who voted more than once and for the subtle intimidation exerted by the lack of enclosed polling booths, the result of the Syrian-Egyptian plebiscite in favor of union under Nasser is still an impressive measure of the hopes the Syrian and Egyptian masses have placed in the Cairo dictator. For Nasser it must also be a rather intimidating result. Nine years ago the Syrians gave their first military dictator, Colonel Husni ez-Zaim, a similar vote of confidence, crediting him as they now credit Nasser with the ability to resolve all their problems and usher in a golden age; but a few months later they were cheering his murderer.

In voting for Nasser the Syrians were also voting, no less decisively, against continuance of an experiment in self-government which had begun with Shukri el-Kuwatli presiding over upper-class nepotism, which had lurched through a series of military coups, and which had come full-circle to a restoration of Kuwatli presiding, this time, over army-licensed middle-class nepotism.

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Rather more hands had gotten into the barrel, but that was all. The political atmosphere in Damascus a few weeks before the *Anschluss* was uncannily French. One encountered the same contempt for the politicians, the same loss of faith in national institutions, that one had left behind 2,000 miles to the west. There was the same harsh amalgam of cynicism, chauvinism, and despair; and educated Syrians, like educated Frenchmen, were simultaneously hoping for and apprehending the advent of a political messiah—who, they conceded, would in all probability leave things worse than before. "It's a matter of fate," said a Syrian diplomat recently returned from London. "The Syrians and the French are fated to have appalling governments, just as the English are fated to eat their appalling food, and there's nothing anyone can do about it."

And then, suddenly, the Syrians were blazing off rifles, thumping drums, and dancing the *dubké* in celebration of their Leader; and he, in between balcony appearances, was bogging himself down in Syrian politics. An executive council and provincial administrators had to be appointed for Syria and one hundred Syrian deputies selected for the "national assembly" of the United Arab Republic. Confidence had to be established in Syria's economic prospects within the U.A.R.—and rapidly, since capital was fleeing the country.* The welcome Nasser received in Damascus can have left him in no doubt that his Syrian subjects expected him to know all the answers; but Syrian "socialist" leaders were quick to pass along the private grapevine (which is all that remains of their party organization) their impression that he knew very few—that he had no clear-cut political or economic philosophy.

The "socialist" leader Akram Hourani, a personal friend of Colonel Shishakli, had helped supply that dictator's doctrinal deficiency for much of his career, breaking with him sufficiently early to avoid sharing his débâcle. By mid-March Syrian cynics were guessing that Hourani, now one of the U.A.R.'s four vice-presidents, had allotted himself a similar role in Nasser's service. General Afif Bizri, whose pebble had helped start the avalanche, was meanwhile opening doors for the U.A.R.'s Egyptian c-in-c, Defense Minister and senior vice-president, Marshal Hakim Amr, and hiding whatever chagrin he felt behind a barrage of wisecracks. While Bizri's stock was falling, his deputy, Colonel Amin Nafouri, had been appointed Minister of Communications for the Syrian "province." Syria's new Minister of the Interior was Abdel-Hamid Serraj, generally agreed to be the Syrian officer most completely in Nasser's confidence—as he had been in Shishakli's. The fellow-traveling ex-banker Khaled el-Azm, Minister of Defense in the outgoing Syrian cabinet, was for the time being unemployed, but this was a consequence mainly of former President Shukri el-Kuwatli's personal hostility. El-Azm's Russophile sympathies, like his onetime pro-French leanings, were in any case never more than an expression of his fundamental opportunism. Afif Bizri's brother Salah, on the other hand, was still in control of the paar-military People's Resistance Movement. Some observers believed that the Commupara-military People's Resistance Movement. since the *Anschluss*—would be able to maintain their basic organization intact inside the P.R.M. set-up. The Communist leader Khalid Begdash and his family had tactfully left for Moscow so as to ease the integration of rank and file Communists into the U.A.R., but few Syrians imagined that they had seen the last of him.

IF THE Cairo-Damascus merger raised Syrian morale it also rescued Gamal Abdel-Nasser from a slough of political and economic despond. On both the internal and international planes his regime had lost momentum and prestige. Criticism of the junta's inefficiency, and allegations of corruption and nepotism, were appearing in duplicated

*As a start it was decided not to pool the Syrian and Egyptian treasuries. Each "province" will continue to have its own Finance Minister and Minister for Economic Affairs: in Syria the latter post will continue to be held by the "socialist" Khalil Kallas.

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handbills and even slipping into the controlled press. The mass-circulation *Rose el-Yussef*, reflecting popular disillusionment, had admitted in November that "not all the leaders of our revolution were heroes and idealists—they included opportunists and racketeers, too." The civil service had relapsed into corrupt ways in many areas, the paper said. The official *Gumhouriya* printed a letter complaining that deception and fraud were "stifling" Egyptians in every sector of their lives: "Fraud has become a social asset, and now our children are taught to lie." Even the puppet national assembly revolted briefly to denounce the incompetence and corruption responsible for the regime's "Liberation Province" fiasco. A former member of the Council of the Revolution, Major Abdel-Raouf of the air force, sought political asylum in Jordan, denouncing Nasser's "egotism and tyranny." The Egyptian people, he said, had fewer rights and greater hardships now than under the old regime.

The *Anschluss* brought Egyptians out in their thousands to cheer Nasser once more and boosted his prestige throughout the region. In Jordan, Iraq, and Kuwait it also raised hopes that these states, too, would be drawn into the U.A.R. and their rulers—symbols of Western influence as well as political anachronisms—cast aside. It was awareness of their subjects' subsiding loyalty that spurred Kings Faisal of Iraq and Hussein of Jordan to federate their territories as an earnest of their Pan-Arab sympathies and then lay the federation at the feet of their dynasty's traditional Saudi rival.

NASSER congratulated King Faisal on the Iraq-Jordan federation, though Egyptian officials now hint that his intention was merely to embarrass the Hashemites who had omitted to congratulate him. But it was noteworthy that the Cairo press passed no comment on the Hashemite federation for two or three days, while the Syrian press and radio assailed it from the start. The Syrian "socialists" were clearly the pacemakers during the first ten days of the U.A.R.'s anti-Hashemite campaign, and the extent of their success may be gauged from Nasser's appointment of one of their leaders, Salah Bitar, independent Syria's last Foreign Minister, as his Minister for Inter-Arab Affairs. Bitar is the only Syrian to make Nasser's seven-man inner cabinet, whose authority covers both Egypt and Syria. An anti-Hashemite of long standing, he urged the Arab League two years ago to "try" Iraq's Premier Nuri es-Said, for "treason to the Arab cause." He now favors an all-out effort to topple the Hashemites before they have time to consolidate their federation and before the effects of Iraqi oil royalties can be felt in Jordan. Already the Jordanian dinar has hardened on the Beirut free market, whereas the Syrian lira is drooping: if this trend continues and the Syrian economy slumps, it will vindicate the northern businessmen and eastern tribal chiefs who have long argued that a tie with prosperous Baghdad would be more profitable as well as more logical than one with distant Cairo.

Nasser's ferocious balcony speech in Damascus on February 26, in which he denounced the Iraqi and Jordanian leaders as "traitors" and "tools of imperialism" who would soon be swept away, delighted the Syrian "leftists" and keynoted the propaganda offensive that is being unleashed in a frank attempt to reduce Iraq to chaos during the forthcoming electoral period. Nuri es-Said, a *cordon bleu* of electoral cookery, had been expected to take over the government sometime in March, but the exceptionally tough cabinet of anti-Egyptian diehards he formed on March 3 was indicative of the vigor with which he intends to respond to the U.A.R. challenge. Three members of his new government are former generals. The Minister of the Interior is a Kurd whose favorite sport is stated by a friend to be cracking the skulls of urban Arab mobs. The Foreign Minister, Fadhel el-Jamali, has publicly declared that it is with Iraq that Syria should unite and has pledged himself to frustrate Nasser's "demagogic" efforts to erect a barrier between the two neighbors. For good measure, he has described Nasser as "a Soviet instrument."

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Nasser's February 26 speech was also intended, Arab observers are generally agreed, to warn King Saud and the Sheikhs of Bahrain and Kuwait against either associating with the Hashemites or launching any federal scheme of their own. Oil workers and students in the territories of all three rulers are becoming increasingly responsive to Cairo radio propaganda and neither Saud nor the Sheikhs would relish being included in Nasser's list of "traitors" and "tools of imperialism." Saud had already shown his respect for Nasser's technique (and his mistrust of certain of his pro-Egyptian brothers, notably the Emir Faisal) by rejecting the young Hashemite kings' offer to federate their territories with his, under his overlordship—an offer that would have made him the head of the world's largest and richest monarchical state. On March 5 Nasser stepped up the pressure on Saud by permitting the release by Colonel Serraj's office in Damascus of "evidence" implicating the king in two plots to overthrow him.

THE Sheikhs of Bahrain and Kuwait, meanwhile, are like cats on a shaky fence. They dislike and fear Saudis, Hashemites, and Syro-Egyptian Pan-Arabists more or less equally, but have been scared into consulting secretly all three. Persia, which has a long-standing claim to Bahrain, has announced that she will break off diplomatic relations with any state which concludes a federation agreement with that sheikhdom. Britain, which handles the external relations of Bahrain and Kuwait, has advised both rulers against taking any rash initiative.

London is in fact far more deeply involved in the crisis than the outside world appears to realize. Kuwait alone is a vital British interest. The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (part-owned by the British government) has a 50 per cent stake in Kuwaiti oil, and Kuwait's oil revenues are an important source of investment capital for the City of London. The Sheikhdom's absorption by either of its neighbors—the overtly anti-British Saudis or the more friendly but unpredictable Hashemites—would be a calamity for Britain. British oil interests in Iraq, too, look precarious, with Nasser squatting on the Iraq Petroleum Company's Mediterranean pipelines and U.A.R. propagandists urging the Iraqis to "Arabize" their country's oil. British officials fear that during the forthcoming Iraqi elections critics of the regime, barred by Nuri's strong-arm cabinet from advocating union with the U.A.R., will make oil nationalization—already a popular issue—their major theme.

In an attempt to head his critics off and rally Arab opinion beyond Iraq's borders to support of the Hashemite Federal Union, Nuri's radio voices were trying hard in mid-March to whip up anti-Israel frenzy. It was Nuri's most overworked gambit, one that had repeatedly tied him and his allies in knots, a reminder of the moral inadequacy that has kept his long career so extraordinarily unfruitful; and it impressed no one. It strengthened the case of those Western officials who were disposed to write Nuri off as a senile nuisance, and enabled Gamal Abdel-Nasser to appear statesmanlike by comparison. In December, Cairo radio had urged Israel (in Hebrew) to "integrate" herself with the "free" Arab bloc and join in the struggle against imperialism. Such "integration," the speaker said, would eliminate Arab-Israel strife and border-haggling. In February Cairo invited Israel (again in Hebrew) to join the U.A.R. The logical long-term solution of the Arab-Israel problem would undoubtedly be Israel's "integration" in a general Near Eastern or Levantine federation; but everything must hinge on the meaning given the word "integration."

For the moment Egyptian spokesmen are in no hurry to offer the sort of definition that might attract Israel. Their current line is to scoff at Israel as being "of no political significance" and beneath the attention of the lofty U.A.R. The Hashemites may impale themselves upon Israel if they wish—and Nasser would no doubt send scavengers to pick up the bits; but for the moment he has more important matters on hand.

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ISRAEL WEIGHS THE NEW CHALLENGE

A Policy of Wait and See

NISSIM REJWAN

JERUSALEM

THE recent moves toward Arab unification, though generally thought to have placed Israel-Arab relations on a new footing, have in reality changed very little. To be sure, the proclamation of a full union between Egypt and Syria on the first day of February, followed by the formal establishment of the "United Arab Republic" by plebiscite three weeks later, had a mixed reception in Jerusalem. But then Israel's attitude to the whole question of Arab unity has never been clearly and authoritatively formulated—largely because the Arab countries themselves have never taken the subject very seriously.

Inter-Arab discords, which the creation of the Arab League in 1945 did nothing to alleviate, are more deep-rooted and linked to interests more vital than is generally admitted. The rise of Egypt as a rival to Iraq in the struggle for ascendancy in the Arab world—a development dating back as recently as the mid-40's—merely sharpened these differences. The Arab states' concerted invasion of Palestine in 1948 not only failed to achieve any tangible results, but, quite typically, produced an even more pronounced split between Egypt and the countries of the Fertile Crescent, especially the two Hashemite kingdoms of Iraq and Jordan. Yet Israel has gained nothing from her neighbors' rivalries, since whenever their rulers wanted to demonstrate their loyalty to Pan-Arabism, all they had to do was to step up their anti-Israel propaganda—or so they thought. These rivalries have thus resulted in the strengthening of anti-Israel sentiment in both Arab camps, who keep trying to outdo each other in bellicose statements directed against the Jewish state.

It is in this light that one has to consider the somewhat sympathetic initial Israeli pronouncements on the recent unions. At the same time, the less publicized reaction was one of dismay not unmixed with anxiety. What Israel has been telling the Arabs—mainly in her new Arabic-language broadcasts—is that she is in favor of any Arab move for unity, as long as the Arabs make it of their own free will. This has been said in perfect sincerity. The contention is that, so long as such a union aims at constructive and positive results, the Arabs will eventually come to realize that peace can be as beneficial to them as it would be to Israel. The theme most favored by Israelis addressing their neighbors is that peace and cooperation in the Middle East would lead them along the road to the solution of their own economic and social problems, instead of concentrating their main efforts on acquiring arms at the expense of their well-being—not to speak of involving the whole area in increasing world-bloc tensions. As seen in Jerusalem, however, the new Egyptian-Syrian union cannot be considered a consummation of the Arabs' presumably age-old aspiration for unity. On the contrary, it is an artificial and forced merger whose long-term repercussions are likely to prove harmful.

The lack of territorial contiguity between the two "provinces" of the United Arab Republic is in itself sufficient to cause some concern, although no immediate threat to peace is seen where Israel is concerned: it

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RESPONSIBLE Israelis take a generally calm view of the recent Arab mergers, according to an Israeli commentator writing from Jerusalem. NISSIM REJWAN, who makes his first appearance in COMMENTARY this month, was born and brought up in Baghdad and specializes in Arab affairs. His writings on Middle Eastern subjects are a regular feature of the Israeli press.

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is believed that Cairo will not, at least for the time being, embark on an anti-Israel adventure, for not only has Israel proved her ability to strike back effectively when and if the need arises, but it is now realized in Cairo and Damascus that an attack on Israel would certainly lead to Western intervention of some kind. But this is not the only danger. Quite apart from the fact that the lack of a rational basis for the Egypt-Syria union can easily lead Nasser on the road of subversion in other Arab territories, there is a crucial historical factor which makes for more inter-Arab tension and bitterness: Iraq has always viewed Greater Syria —Syria, Jordan, Palestine, and the Lebanon —as her natural sphere of expansion. The original Pan-Arab concept, which originated in the so-called Arab Kingdom promised to the Sherif Hussein of Mecca by the British government in the First World War, excluded Egypt from any possible Arab union. Now, by virtually annexing Syria, Egypt has in fact dealt a blow to the cause of Arab unity as it has for decades been understood this side of Suez. Dr. Fadhil el-Jamali, a former Iraqi Prime Minister, not surprisingly described the new federation as an "act of defiance," pointing out that its chief aim was "to tear Syria away from Iraq." This "act of defiance" was naturally not taken lightly in Baghdad, and the goal of Arab unity now seems farther removed than ever.

THE imbalance created in inter-Arab relations by the establishment of the United Arab Republic was thus a real one, and neither Jordan nor Iraq could possibly sit idle and see their respective positions imperiled by the Pan-Arab ambitions of the Egyptian regime. The rejoinder came promptly. On February 14, less than two weeks after the announcement of the Egypt-Syria merger, an agreement was signed in Amman by King Faisal II of Iraq and King Hussein of Jordan, announcing the establishment of an Arab Federation ("Al-Ittihad Al-Arabi"), a new state merging the two Hashemite kingdoms. The agreement was fairly comprehensive, and as a counter to Cairo's move the rival Federation could prove quite effective: it has at any rate saved Hussein's throne, if not his neck. Short of merging the two thrones (and relinquishing one of their United Nations delegations), unification is complete. The two countries are to have one government, one army (the "Arab Army"), one economy, and one flag; the Federation's capital is to alternate between Baghdad and Amman every six months; and Hussein, who is to preserve his throne, will periodically take the place of Faisal, who was proclaimed head of the new state. That the Jordanians got quite a fair deal—far better than the Syrians did from Egypt—is illustrated by the fact that an equal number of Jordanian and Iraqi deputies are to be chosen for the Federation's legislature, though Jordan's population is just below a quarter that of Iraq.

Iraq's membership in the Baghdad Pact was, however, bound to prove a stumbling block. The proclamation of the Egypt-Syria union, following hard on the heels of the Baghdad Pact council's meeting in Ankara in the last week of January, had aggravated Iraq's sense of isolation within that wholly non-Arab alliance. On the eve of the meeting, in fact, there were rumors that Iraq was contemplating leaving the Pact altogether, should her demand for a "solution" of the "Palestine question" in accordance with the UN Partition Resolution of 1947 be rejected. Nuri es-Said, Iraq's strong man who led his country's delegation to the Baghdad Pact parley, arrived in Ankara two weeks before the meeting opened, but apparently failed to prevail upon the Turkish government to back his demand for an enforced settlement of the Arab-Israel dispute. (His other pursuits, including the talks he held with exiled Syrians about possible ways of toppling the existing pro-Soviet regime in Damascus, equally proved dismal failures.) The Iraqis' inability to give the Baghdad Pact an "Arab" look completed their isolation from the rest of the Arab world. This isolation had started in December 1955, when the Egyptian radio (and Saudi Arabian gold) combined to foil Britain's

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rash attempt to bring Jordan into the Baghdad Pact. Now, for Jordan to enter a full union with Iraq—Baghdad Pact and all—would have been decried by the eager Pan-Arab propagandists in Cairo and Damascus as the highest of treasons. Accordingly, a convenient formula was found when it was agreed that any international treaty, alliance, or convention which either state had signed before entering the Federation did not commit the other member. It is not clear how this condition can be met when one of the signatories finds itself in a state of war as a result of previous commitments, seeing that the two armies will henceforth be merged into one.

On the whole, however, the Arab Federation seems a more plausible enterprise than the United Arab Republic. Unlike the latter, the Iraq-Jordan merger is based on territorial contiguity, and the Iraqi economy will complement, rather than compete with, Jordan's non-viable structure. More significantly, Iraq will be in a position, should she so desire, to use to advantage the enormous manpower and labor potential of the masses of Palestine refugees now idling away in squalid refugee camps on the Jordan's west bank. This prospect opens the way for the solution of problems that for a long time seemed insoluble, and the refugees, who have been the main source of peril to Hussein's throne, may conceivably find their way to a decent settlement in Iraq where they can help in the country's ambitious development projects.

Yet, in political terms, the effect of the Iraq-Jordan union on inter-Arab relations has tended to intensify rather than ease the existing tensions. With two Arab mergers accomplished in the space of two weeks, real unity is no nearer. Following a polite message of congratulation sent by Nasser to King Faisal on the day of the signing, Cairo and Damascus promptly began to attack the new merger, while Nasser himself now calls on Iraq and Jordan to "free themselves of all imperialist fetters," including the Baghdad Pact and the Eisenhower Doctrine. In Syria, especially, the Federation has come under concentrated fire, on the ground, among other things, that it is "artificial," whereas Syria's own merger with Egypt is presumably natural and logical. With Syria now in the front line of the Iraqi-Egyptian struggle for leadership of the Arab world, the pro-Iraqi elements in Damascus may yet prove a headache for their Egyptian overseers. It is well known that an influential section of Syrian opinion is opposed to the complete surrender of sovereignty to Egypt, despite the voting figures published after the plebiscite of February 21.

THE precise implications for Israel of the two rival mergers in the Arab world are not as yet clear. Initial pronouncements from either camp were uniformly bellicose and hostile, especially those emanating from Damascus and Amman. In his announcement of the merger with Syria, Colonel Nasser contented himself with remarking that the Arabs must attain unity "so that we can avoid a repetition of the Palestine tragedy"; but in later utterances he was to become progressively more hostile. Anwar el-Sadat, the most active of Nasser's associates, spoke of the opening of "a campaign to avenge our spilt blood in Palestine." In Damascus, the then Prime Minister, Sabri el-Assali, declared that the union would prove "a crushing blow to Israel and Imperialism"; and Akram el-Hourani, leader of the Pan-Arab "Socialist" Ba'ath (Resurgence) party, and speaker of the Syrian chamber of deputies, thought the union constituted "the most fitting start for restoring Palestine." Equally bellicose remarks accompanied the proclamation of the rival Arab Federation. King Hussein gave a solemn pledge that "we will never lay down our arms until we attain our legitimate rights and the purloined land of Palestine—or die"; while Iraq's Foreign Minister, Burhan ed-Din Basha'yan, declared that the union with Jordan was "realistic" chiefly because "it transfers Iraq's borders to those of Israel."

The official Israeli reaction to the two mergers was at the outset extremely guarded. A policy of wait-and-see was reputedly

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adopted at a Cabinet session held two days after the proclamation of the Arab Federation. No conclusions were at first formulated with regard to the many political and legal questions raised by the mergers, including the important one of Iraq's legal position with regard to the Israel-Jordan Armistice Agreement. (Iraq signed no such agreement with Israel, although she took part in the Arab invasion of Palestine in 1948.) It should be recalled that in the fall of 1956 the Israeli government was not only firmly opposed to the entry of Iraqi troops into Jordan, but even threatened to take drastic measures in such an eventuality. Now that the armies of Jordan and Iraq are to be merged under a single command, public opinion in Israel has been quick to point out that the situation requires careful study. In the end, Israel's official stand was made clear by Mr. Ben Gurion, who declared on February 26 that Israel reserved her right to take action should Iraqi troops approach the Jordan River.

The press was naturally in a better position than the government to comment on the mergers and their implications for Israel. Most papers drew attention to the fact that, though Israel should welcome any step toward closer cooperation between the countries of the Middle East, these mergers created serious problems. *Davar* (which is usually considered to reflect official opinion), while expressing the belief that a lot of water will flow down the Nile and the Euphrates before Arab union becomes a reality, held that recent events "have created a new political situation which calls for alertness and watchfulness on Israel's part." It also pointed out that Israel herself could have had a place in such a union, had it not been conceived in a spirit of hatred for Israel. *Ha-aretz*, recalling that in 1948 the armies of all the Arab states took part in the invasion of Israel, warned that it was always possible for them to come to an understanding with each other at the decisive moment in order to attack Israel in unison. The Jerusalem *Post* commented that every time there had been talk of union among the Arabs it was inspired "only by hostility to another nation—Britain in the past, France now, and Israel always." The view that the new mergers were not calculated to strengthen the prospect of peace in the area was also shared by the Achdut Ha-avodah organ *La-Merchav*, while the optimistic *Al-Hamishmar* of the United Workers party (Mapam), asserted that since the Arabs could not overlook the fact that Israel is a living reality, "they will be unable for long to ignore the need to arrive at a peace settlement."

On the whole, Israelis have confidence in the future. The average Israeli, who tends to be more politically-minded than his opposite number anywhere in the world, likes to recall that the Israeli army has consistently proved more than a match for the Arabs, whether separately or combined. Of Israel's political parties, the right-wing Herut was alone in demanding a "firm policy" toward the mergers. The party's leader, Menahem Begin, in presenting a motion in the Knesset, urged among other things that the Arab Federation meant the annexation by Iraq of parts of Palestine on the other side of the Armistice lines, while the United Arab Republic meant in effect Syria's inclusion in Egypt. Most people on the contrary seem to feel that the mergers change very little in the situation that has existed since the Sinai operations in the fall of 1956, when Israel's success in smashing Egypt's elaborate military preparations in the Sinai peninsula brought about a change in the power balance and gave Israel a respite from Egyptian guerrilla raids and the constant threat of full-scale invasion. The pacification of Egypt's borders with Israel, the stationing of an international police force in the Gaza Strip, and the opening of the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli shipping have given the country a badly needed opportunity to go ahead with constructive projects. But the Sinai campaign, though it brought immediate advantages, has really changed nothing in the basic facts of Israel's position in the region. The Arab boycott is still in force, and the closing of the Suez Canal to Israeli

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shipping has remained; despite inter-Arab splits and differences—and also because of them—Arab spokesmen everywhere keep making the same threatening statements about Israel. The Arabs maintain that time is working in their favor and that, surrounded by 40 million Arabs on the march, Israel must sooner or later come to terms. The apparent plausibility of this view makes the wilder Arab dreams seem reasonable.

How is Israel to counter these pressures? On the face of it, the prospect of being isolated in a vast Arab "sea" is serious enough. The policy of conciliation pursued since 1949 has proved unfruitful. Israel's repeated offers of peace were not only rejected out of hand, but were taken as signs of weakness and as an added proof that the Arabs' own estimate of the new state's prospects was correct. For most of this period Israel's policy was in fact based more or less firmly on a few time-honored assumptions inherited from the early days of socialist Zionism. These assumptions were that progress in the Arab world would eventually bring about a change of attitude; that the Jewish state could deal best with "progressive" Arab elements; and that as the existing feudal and autocratic regimes begin to crumble and the so-called enlightened strata take over, the prospect of a peaceful settlement with these countries will become real. Israel, it was maintained, could then take an active part in "emancipating" the Arab masses from their ignorance, poverty, and disease. Echoes of this attitude are still being heard today, e.g. in the *Davar* editorial mentioned earlier. There are sections of the Zionist movement which still engage in expounding this antiquated thesis and urging the government to act on it. The United Workers party (Mapam), for one, maintains that a sort of alliance between Arab socialist forces and their opposite numbers in Israel must and can be achieved for the good of the region as a whole. The editors of *New Outlook*, an Israeli monthly controlled by Mapam and "Peace Movement" enthusiasts—with the blessings, it is generally thought, of Dr. Nahum Goldmann, president of the World Zionist Organization—have been publishing lengthy dissertations on the theme of a "Middle Eastern Federation" that is to include Israel. In its February issue, this journal erected an entire theoretical structure on a statement alleged to have been made by Michel Aflek, a leader of the Ba'ath party in Syria, to the effect that he would be ready to enter into discussions with "Jewish" socialists on the basis of common action to establish a Middle East Socialist Federation "that would allow the separate nations autonomy in their internal affairs, but would reserve foreign affairs and defense to the Federal Government." In actual fact Fenner Brockway, a British Labor M.P. and chairman of the "Congress of Peoples Against Imperialism," had himself written the article. It was to him that Aflek's remark was supposed to have been made, as reported by Mr. Brockway in a letter to the editor of the London *New Statesman*. In his *New Outlook* article, Mr. Brockway went so far as to claim that Dr. Goldmann's appeals for a new approach (including such lofty aims as non-involvement in the cold war, the neutralization of the Middle East, etc.) have had "a profound effect" in Israel. He did not omit to mention that the so-called neutralization of the Middle East under a great power agreement "is also the policy of the British Labor party."

Happily, however, this amateur textbook attitude toward Israel's Arab neighbors is no longer official policy, although it is still detectable in all kinds of official and semi-official utterances. Since the establishment of the Jewish state, considerable changes have taken place in the Arab world, and the results would not seem to justify such optimism. The young, "enlightened" Arab is not noticeably more liberal than his father; he is, if anything, more rigid and more lacking in scruples, and he possesses better means to assert himself and render his opponents powerless. Usually a young officer or an "intellectual" with long-standing grievances, he is not restrained by the age-old traditions which governed the actions of his elders. He

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is not even aware of them, his history textbooks having been completely distorted and his head being full of fantasies about the glorious national struggle for unity in 19th-century Germany, Italy, and Japan—plus dreams of a united Arab nation extending from the Atlantic to the Persian Gulf. How, then, is Israel, a country which in Arab eyes is an intruder and an aggressor, to deal with the modern Arab—an Arab who has freed his country from the "feudalism," the "reaction," and the "desert civilization" which have so far been considered the chief stumbling blocks in the way of Arab-Jewish understanding? One thing, at least, is clear: a nation's entire future cannot be built on dogmatic assumptions and petrified slogans. Progressive or reactionary, young or old, left-winger or conservative, the Arab today has nothing but hostility and distrust for Israel. Other, more effective policies than one of waiting for the "enlightened" and Westernized Arabs to take over will have to be found.

THE attempt has been made. Side by side with the policy of the outstretched hand, a search for more tangible long-term methods was always in progress. Looking beyond the chain of hostile lands all around her, Israel has been turning her attention to the countries of Asia and Africa lying on the periphery of the Arab world. A network of economic ties and friendly contacts has been established with some of these countries, and in a number of them Israel already possesses a considerable standing as a friendly country whose assistance is not accompanied by "strings." The list is impressive, and the results so far achieved are fairly encouraging. About 25 per cent of Israel's total exports and imports during 1956 ($107 million and $364 million respectively) were transacted in countries outside North America and Western Europe (including Britain). Israel, though unable to purchase oil in Iraq, meat in Jordan, or cotton in Egypt (in addition to being debarred from using the Suez Canal for her shipping) is now preparing, in the words of a British observer, "to take a leap over the besieging forces and look beyond the Middle East to Africa and Asia for goods she is denied nearer home." Such countries as Burma in Southeast Asia; Ethiopia and Somaliland in East Africa; Ghana, Liberia, and Nigeria in West Africa; Japan, Madagascar, Mozambique, and Turkey, now supply Israel with food and raw materials, and buy her industrial exports. Trade relations have also been established with South Africa, Australia, Southern Rhodesia, Ceylon, the Philippines, and Thailand. At the end of February, two Israeli Ministers were abroad on a series of visits in the Far East and in West Africa. Mrs. Golda Meir, the Foreign Minister, has visited Liberia, Ghana (where she represented Israel at the country's first Independence Day celebrations), Abidjan on the Ivory Coast, Nigeria, and Dakar in Senegal. The Minister of Trade and Industry, Pinhas Sapir, on a round of visits in countries of the Far East, obtained a treaty of friendship with the Philippines and closer economic ties with Japan.

Israel's contact with Asian and African nations has a firm basis in the wider context of her foreign policy. The new orientation is definitely more than a passing phase or an opportunist attempt to gain the sympathy of these nations at a time when their political and moral influence is increasing both inside and outside the United Nations. Israel's Afro-Asian ties can go a long way toward countering the Arab boycott and blockade. They can show the Arab leaders the ultimate futility of their present policy, since Israel can now find adequate outlets for her exports, and suitable markets for her purchases in non-Western countries. Moreover, these relations are not confined to trade alone. Cultural links are also being promoted, and several scholarships for study at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem have been granted to Asian students. Ben Gurion has even suggested that the University establish a chair for Indian Philosophy.

Does Israel's foreign policy then have a definite orientation? In dealing with her Arab neighbors, Israel can hardly be said to have a well-defined policy. Ever since

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Egypt's Czech arms deal in 1955 and the intensification of the cold war in the Middle East, Israel-Arab relations—and Israel's Arab policy insofar as it existed at all—have been determined by great power moves in the area. When in 1955 the Soviet Union appeared on the scene in full force, it was to the West that Israel had to turn for help to restore the balance nearly upset by the flow of Russian arms into Egypt. The attempt to draw the West's attention to the grave situation created by these arms supplies was, however, slow in producing results. The U.S. remained seemingly unmoved until the very end, and Israel's requirements had to be covered elsewhere—especially in France. It was not long before France and Israel found it to their mutual benefit to achieve some sort of alliance. Both were threatened by Colonel Nasser's Pan-Arab ambitions which envisaged a united Arab domain extending from the Atlantic to the Persian Gulf. For Nasser was backing these dreams by deeds. In Algeria he openly extended aid to the rebels in the form of arms shipments, and France resented this interference. Israel was even more vitally and openly threatened. The fedayeen raids, which often extended deep into the country, threatened the life of her inhabitants and disrupted the normal working of her whole civilian life. Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal Company hastened the process which culminated in the Sinai campaign. Although it is not yet possible to describe the extent of help provided by the French in the fateful weeks preceding the Sinai operations, there is no doubt that, in France, Israel has found a true ally. Numerous statements coming from French quarters since the Sinai campaign have been consistent in asserting the solidity of this friendship. The "alliance," though as yet informal and unwritten, is viewed as something that French Cabinet changes, and the vicissitudes of the cold war, will not affect.

With the Arabs adamant in their refusal to talk peace, Israel has thus had to look for friends beyond her immediate neighbors. What has been called the Middle East orientation in her foreign policy was never a real possibility: repeated offers of conciliation not only proved ineffective, but produced unwelcome results. On the other hand, those Middle Eastern states that were not Arab were variously committed to defend—or appear to defend—Arab interests: Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan are all members of the Baghdad Pact and have to tread lightly where Iraq's Pan-Arab complexes are concerned.

THE truth seems to be, then, that Israel's foreign policy has no particular orientation; indeed, it cannot afford to adopt a rigid course. Various people at various times have talked, and will no doubt continue to talk, about this and that orientation—Middle Eastern, Mediterranean, European, or Afro-Asian. Yet in Jerusalem the whole controversy appears somewhat academic. As far as can be seen, Israel's foreign policy is empirical rather than dogmatic—which is really what every sound policy should be. Israel will not refuse to sign a settlement with the Arab Federation of Iraq and Jordan because their regimes are considered reactionary and feudal; she will readily cooperate with the United Arab Republic despite the latter's undemocratic nature; and when her security considerations require it, she would enter a European alliance to safeguard her frontiers. The recent developments in Cairo and Damascus, or in Baghdad and Amman, are not likely to produce any deep change. The fact that all the parties to the new unions keep declaring that their aim is to destroy Israel naturally creates some concern. But then such declarations have become familiar. No new course of action is contemplated. As Ben Gurion told a group of foreign journalists recently, Israel's policy "is to continue with our constructive work in our own state, consolidate our economy, educate our people and go on with business as usual." Meanwhile the consolidation of new ties with various countries of Asia and Africa constitutes a partial reply to Arab threats of destruction. It is the only reply possible for the time being.

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HOW WE BEAT THE MACHINE

Challenging Tammany at the District Level

ROBERT LEKACHMAN

IN THE short history of the Riverside Democrats, an insurgent political club in the Columbia University area, September 10, 1957, was a night to remember. The sounds of revelry which emanated from its headquarters on Broadway and 106th Street signalized an event rare in the annals of local Democratic affairs: the triumph, and on its first attempt at that, of a local reform group. Its two candidates for district leader, William Fitts Ryan and Shirley Kaye, had soundly trounced the Tammany leadership of the district.

No wonder that the new group of professionals, mostly amateurs less than a year before, sang, shouted, and whooped in exultation unmarred by either regret for past inactivity or premonition of future trouble. Indeed, few group experiences can be more intoxicating than election night when early returns promise victory, and every later return increases victory's scope. Each new face in the door seemed likely to be bringing the good news of opposition defeat in yet another election district, and since there are fifty-four election districts in the Seventh Assembly District, the scene of this particular contest, good tidings were plentiful. Even before victory was official, unfamiliar men and women appeared for the first time in the club headquarters, conscious that power was shifting and old favors henceforth would have to be sought in new places. Telephones never ceased ringing. Newspaper interest suddenly increased. In the midst of it all the candidates, happy but tired as only politics can tire, strove to say the appropriate things—thanks to supporters, assurances of continued effort, gentle reminders that victory was a beginning, not an ending.

How do liberal Democrats eject Tammany district leaders? What happens after they do so? The story of the successful campaign may suggest an answer to the first question, but no answer to the second can yet be given. The story of the Riverside Democrats begins with the disastrous national election of November 1956. As in many other parts of the city, the local Tammany leadership did little to bring out the vote for Stevenson, Kefauver, and Wagner. The principal interest of the conventional political club is patronage, and patronage is dispensed by Governor Harriman in the Statehouse and Mayor Wagner in City Hall, with the notable assistance of Carmine De Sapio. Moreover, Mr. De Sapio had supported Harriman, not Stevenson, for the Presidential nomination. Under the circumstances, neither self-interest nor personal loyalty dictated excessive effort in the interests of the national ticket.

Frustrated by the indifference of the regular Democrats, a few devoted Stevensonians, led by William Fitts Ryan, formed the Morningside-Columbia Committee for Stevenson, Kefauver, and Wagner, which, despite its impressive name, made its headquarters in a basement of modest dimensions. Stevenson's victory in the area was the direct result of the group's intensive work. The experience made one point clear: the connection between local machine politics and liberal national candidates usually hurts the latter. An easy inference was the need for better local organizations interested in more than the personal advantage of their own members. Therefore, Bill Ryan called a meeting, attended by ten persons, to talk

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about the possibility of starting a new club.

Bill Ryan, in November 1956, was one of District Attorney Hogan's principal trial assistants. Among many other cases, he had worked on Johnny Dio's paper locals. Although he is a graduate of both Princeton College and Columbia Law School, this double taint of the Ivy League has not ruined him for political purposes. A simple, direct speaker, he gives an impression of transparent honesty which greater acquaintance tends to confirm. It does him no harm that he is tall, handsome, and Irish, nor that his hair curls and he blushes easily. A charming wife and three children complete the picture.

The predictable consequence of this first meeting in late November was a decision to meet again and invite more participants. The two or three meetings which followed in December and early January were designed partly to test the feasibility of starting another club, and partly to educate the group, many of whom were dim about so elementary a point as the boundaries of the Seventh Assembly District.* It was easier to learn these boundaries than it was to comprehend the unique role of the district leader in local politics. The legal position of the district leader is simple: he is an unpaid party (not public) official. Some light is shed on his actual role when it is added that each district leader is a member of the executive committee of the New York County Committee, and that the chairman of that executive committee is Carmine De Sapio. Mr. De Sapio derives his powers from his election by other district leaders as their chairman. Since he is not uninfluential in the appointment of many city and state officials and in the selection of numerous candidates for elective office, it is theoretically possible, by electing a majority of insurgent district leaders, to choose a more sympathetic chairman, and through him, better nominees for public office. A district leader in favor with Mr. De Sapio exercises considerable influence himself in making these appointments and nominations, which include perhaps five or six jobs paying more than $10,000 per year; his influence extends also to the naming of candidates for municipal court judgeships, assembly and state senatorial seats, and a share of a Congressional representative. Moreover, a wide variety of trivial patronage filters through his hands: miscellaneous legal chores (it is not altruism alone which induces young lawyers to hang around political clubhouses), election inspectors' jobs, even temporary appointees to the Post Office and other governmental offices.

Nor is this all. Although as a party, rather than a public, official, he cannot directly affect site selection for schools and parks, or place constituents in housing projects, or arrange admission to city welfare facilities, in practice city officials often heed the voice of the regular district leader. In fact the experienced district leader can, if he wishes, do a great many things for his friends: relieve them of jury service, see that housing regulations are sympathetically interpreted, accelerate action by city officials. The fact that some of these actions may skirt legality rather narrowly probably makes them all the more valuable to supplicants.

WHILE the twenty or so persons loosely affiliated with the not yet named Riverside Democrats were learning facts of this sort, they were also considering whether and how they should organize. Two practical problems confronted them. Should they accept the proposal of a group of insurgent Democrats in the Fifth Assembly District, south of the Seventh, to form a larger club seeking members from both assembly districts? And what should be their relations with Bob Blaikie and the dissident club which he headed? Blaikie had held the leadership in the district both as a regular and then as an insurgent. Since Bob Blaikie is a somewhat controversial figure whose claim to consistent liberalism is open to question,

*The district is bounded on the west by Riverside Drive, the east by Central Park West and Morningside Drive, the north mostly by 125th Street, and the south by 97th Street in some places and 100th Street in the remainder.

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most considered association with him damaging.* When its offer of amalgamation was refused, the Blaikie club dissolved and, ultimately, many of its members joined the new Riverside Democrats. After further soul-searching, it was also decided to refuse the offer of Fifth A.D. Democrats and to move into the now vacant former Blaikie headquarters. On January 28, in a meeting at the Columbia University Faculty Club, attended by perhaps forty persons, a constitution was adopted, and officers and a board of directors were elected.

This is a convenient place to ask who these people were. As a group, the members of the Riverside Democrats at this January 1957 meeting were young, with an overwhelming concentration in their early and middle thirties, and extremely well educated. All eight officers were college graduates and seven had done graduate work in schools like Harvard, Princeton, Yale, and Columbia. Although these were a group of eggheads, they were not academic eggheads. None of the officers and only one of the nineteen-member board of directors was a university teacher. It is mildly paradoxical that professional educators showed so little interest in this venture in political education. As a group, the first members of the Riverside Democrats were successful in such diverse professional fields as the law, journalism, medicine, finance, and economics. Neither their prestige nor their incomes depended upon the fruits of political activity. Finally, they were mostly amateurs who had never actively worked in a local campaign, some of them too shy to speak at meetings, others horrified at the prospect of ringing doorbells and talking to strange people.

In February the club moved into its new headquarters, a large room of perhaps forty feet by twenty feet, directly above an Orthodox synagogue. Then followed the most uncertain months of the group's existence. It subsisted only because members lent it money, in many cases still not repaid. Its very chairs were purchased with borrowed money. Some of the Blaikie supporters whom it hoped to attract failed to appear. Members mimeographed materials on the equipment of the offices where they worked, in semi-clandestine fashion. A very little money came from dues and a bit more from the proceeds of club-sponsored parties. There were also one or two large donations, perhaps $100 in size. The bulk of activity consisted of educational meetings and increasingly anxious discussion about entering the district leadership primary. Here two major uncertainties clouded the decision. For a time there was a strong possibility that the date of the primary would be in the spring rather than in the fall. A spring date would have made it impossible to collect enough signatures on petitions to qualify for a position on the ballot. A second uncertainty was connected with Bill Ryan's position in the District Attorney's office. If he ran for district leader, he would have to give up his job. Since his own resources were narrow, considerable financial sacrifice would accompany this decision.

Organizations develop their own momentum. In retrospect it appears inevitable, first, that the club should have rented quarters at an expense beyond its means, and second, that it should have entered the leadership race as soon as the fall date was announced. And the choice of the male candidate also seems inevitable, although one opponent was nominated. Bill Ryan had been exceedingly active. As a former president of the New York Young Democrats, he was one of the club's few experienced members. And he was one of the most personally appealing of the possibilities. At a party after the election, a group spent a fair amount of time in considering whether he possessed "charisma." If charisma implies the capacity to evoke faith without works, then Bill Ryan comes closer than most young politicians to its possession.

It was difficult to find a politically attractive female candidate. Theoretically, though seldom actually, the district leaders,

*During the mayoralty election of 1957, Blaikie headed a lonely handful of Democrats for Christenberry, the Republican candidate.

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one male and one female, are absolutely equal in status and power. Following the district tradition with some misgivings, the club decided that the woman should be Jewish, since the man was Irish, preferably a mother, and an active participant in community affairs. Various personal reasons induced all of the leading possibilities to refuse, with the exception of Shirley Kaye, who met every specification: Jewish, mother of a child, and active in both the League of Women Voters and the Parents' Association, of which she had been president. She proved in the campaign that she was more than a collection of qualifications, for her independent following produced a vote actually higher than Bill Ryan's. On June 20, at a general membership meeting, attended at a generous estimate by eighty persons, the club endorsed Ryan and Kaye.

IMMEDIATELY, a series of problems afflicted the club. First of all money. The cost of even a local campaign aided by unpaid labor and contributed materials is high. It costs $300 in postage alone to mail the cheapest piece of literature to 22,000 Democrats. Before the campaign was over the club spent more than $7,000. Wynn Kramarsky, a belligerent campaign manager, did most to solve the problem. A former member of the Lexington Club, a successful insurgent group on the East Side, Wynn knew many of the wealthy Democrats who belonged to it and could tap them for contributions. But it was equally vital to broaden the club's membership. Coalitions win campaigns and the original members of the club could not deliver enough votes. The obvious target was the former Blaikie group. Several bridges to them existed. Bill Ryan had himself served as a Blaikie captain.* Treva Greenwalt, a tireless canvassing manager, had worked with Dan Kelly, the maverick assemblyman who had been supported by the Blaikie club against the candidate of the Tammany club, whose district leader is William J. Sheldrick. Initially cautious in associating himself with the new group, Dan Kelly involved himself more and more as the campaign advanced. One of his major contributions was the attraction to the club of many former Blaikie members. His own endorsement of the Riverside Democrats helped considerably, for Kelly had gained a substantial personal following by studious independence of the regular Democratic leadership of the Assembly. His had often been a lone voice raised against undesirable legislation. The Blaikie people are older, less liberal, and closer to classic organizational types than the group they joined. The club also sought the aid of the Puerto Ricans, invariably known for political purposes as the Spanish-speaking group. This effort was a risk, for one view was that votes won in Puerto Rican districts might be offset by losses in Irish districts.

Nominating petitions were the most immediate problem. In order to qualify for listing on the printed ballot, it is necessary to secure the signatures of 5 per cent of the registered Democrats. But it is highly desirable to acquire far more than 5 per cent. The opposition can challenge signatures, either for fraud or technical deficiency, and most judges are sympathetic to organization claims. But even more important, voters who sign your petitions are good prospects to vote your way in the primary. The club aimed at 6,000 signatures by the end of July, and actually collected something over 4,000. This is one of the activities—fund-raising is another—where the professional is indispensable. A key figure, therefore, was George Minkin, an attorney skilled in the election law, experienced in other contests, and, though intellectual in taste, combative in temperament. The Sheldrick failure to challenge any Riverside signature was the result, in part at least, of Minkin's briefcase full of carefully prepared challenges of Sheldrick signatures.

Once the petition crisis was surmounted, the campaign itself evoked the maximum energies of dozens if not scores of workers throughout August and the first ten days of September. Barbara Palmore, the club's sec-

*A "captain" is a person responsible for canvassing in an election district and shepherding sympathetic voters to the polls.

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retary, more than anyone else coordinated these volunteer efforts. Coordinating is a large word. In practice it means never-ending telephone conversations and a readiness to keep promises made and remember assignments suggested. A mass of literature, of varying quality, was mailed or distributed by hand. The club published two newsletters. It sent out sample ballots, a move of some importance because the primary ballot is insanely complicated and it is laughably easy to invalidate a vote by incorrect marking. Just before the election, postcard reminders were mailed. But it is safe to say that literature wins no campaigns. Much is thrown away unread. Part of the remainder must impress the skeptical as canceling opposition claims, like competing ads.

The club also deployed much more intensively than its opposition that instrument of Satan, the sound-truck, one of the most annoying disturbers of urban peace. Yet there is the story of the lady who called frequently to testify to her annoyance at the racket, but whose last call confessed that she had been converted and planned to vote for Ryan and Kaye. Undeniably, the sound-truck drew good crowds and in speaking to them the Riverside Democrats had a decided advantage: their candidates were effective orators. Because he knew no Spanish, Bill Ryan evolved an effective technique for working the Puerto Rican districts. Stationing on the sound-truck someone who could speak Spanish, he shook hands with everyone in sight. The sound-truck was the hero of one of the campaign's most amusing incidents. The week before the election, Carmine De Sapio came up to speak at the Sheldrick club. Word of his appearance leaked to the Riverside Democrats, and some sardonic soul got the notion of parking the sound-truck a block or so away and turning its volume up. On a hot September evening, Mr. De Sapio's hosts had the unpleasant choice of leaving the windows open and hearing little of their guest's remarks, or closing the windows and facing near suffocation. It is said that they courageously chose the second alternative.

Politics is above all a matter of personal relations. Particularly in a primary campaign, where the issues are complex or nonexistent, the personal appeal is critical. Ideally no doubt it would be otherwise, but in fact many a vote is cast as a favor to the canvasser who solicited it. Canvassing is hard, exasperating, dispiriting work. One of the best canvassers divided his district into good houses and bad houses. Every evening he started with a bad house. After the first door had been slammed in his face, he went to a good house to soothe his spirit. Otherwise (he suggests) he would have quit. But the work is also educational. It taught a good many canvassers just how wretched are the housing arrangements of Negroes, Puerto Ricans, and others in this area. Oddly enough, amateurs canvass more successfully than professionals, simply because they are amateurs, fresh in approach, personable in appearance, and obviously uninterested in personal gain.

Of such amateur canvassers the Riverside Democrats had a large supply. The few veterans had acquired their experience mostly as workers in Dan Kelly's primary campaigns. Added to them were recruits from the Young Democrats and the Lexington Club whose aid was especially significant on primary day itself when the need for experienced poll watchers is great. The canvassers included an extraordinarily good-looking group of young women. No doubt it is only hyperbole to assert that insurgent Democratic women are prettier than other women, but in this instance the evidence was strong.

What did the canvassers and the sound-truck orators talk about? What were the issues? The usual primary fight is a struggle for power, not a contest over issues. Therefore, the present campaign was an exception. At its beginning, the major issues seemed to be failure to support Stevenson in 1956, political patronage,* enforcement of housing regulations, and the Manhattan-

*Sheldrick himself, though innocent of legal training, occupies the position of confidential attendant to the justices of the Supreme Court of the First Judicial Department.

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town housing project. Since many Democratic voters cast their ballots for Eisenhower in 1956, the first issue demanded careful handling. The patronage issue, whatever its validity, has an old, musty air about it. The issue which really caught fire was the Manhattantown project. Here the facts were damning. The developers of the project seem to have found it more profitable to collect parking lot fees and rents from not yet demolished buildings than to construct the new apartments which was their proper purpose. In an area where housing is desperately short, excessively expensive, and cynically exploited, Manhattantown was a constant irritation. It turned out that three of the businessmen who had shared in the profits of this speculation had contributed to Sheldrick funds and that one of them was actually a Sheldrick candidate. Probably the most effective single bit of literature of the campaign was the leaflet which established these connections. It featured reproductions of Senate hearings, an honorary patron's card in the Sheldrick Association, and two pages of the Sheldrick fund-raising souvenir program with the three names heavily circled.

Late in the campaign, the Sheldrick people suddenly became apprehensive. Until ten days or so before primary day on September 10, their every action had breathed confidence in themselves and contempt for their opponents. Their new alarm took the shape of claims of endorsement by, among others, Mrs. Roosevelt, at this time visiting Moscow. (It says something about the exigencies of practical politics that her cablegram, datelined Moscow, reaffirming her support of Ryan and Kaye, was reproduced in the club leaflets with the Moscow identification cautiously deleted.) In the battle of endorsements, Ryan and Kaye had the good fortune to win an unusually strong statement by the Citizens' Union, which must have had a favorable impact not only upon the university voters but also upon the prosperous Jewish population concentrated on West End Avenue and Riverside Drive.

Another token of Sheldrick apprehension was their much heavier use of the "Red" issue. Sheldrick canvassers emphasized the ADA affiliations of some Riverside Democrats. One of the Ryan workers countered this charge with the ploy that ADA actually meant Assistant District Attorney. The success of this maneuver is not recorded. A blow at the Ryan fortunes was struck by Frank Hogan when he suddenly prohibited Assistant District Attorneys in his office from working with the Ryan forces on election day. Expert canvassers, they acquired personal followings which aggregated several hundred votes. It testifies to Ryan's personal appeal that no fewer than seven of those who were on Hogan's staff worked for Ryan during the campaign.

As September 10, 1957, approached, a new worry appeared. After the usual fashion, the election inspectors at each poll were Sheldrick-appointed. Unless experienced poll watchers protected Ryan and Kaye interests and observed the count after the polls closed, Sheldrick watchers and Sheldrick inspectors might combine to invalidate Ryan ballots and pass Sheldrick ballots. Once more professional help met and overcame the crisis. Literally dozens of Young Democrats and Lexington Club members, veterans of many election fights, swarmed into the district. A surplus of trained workers actually resulted. No poll was unwatched. No watcher tired and allowed the count to proceed by default. So zealous indeed were the Ryan and Kaye partisans that one was ejected by the police and another caused the ejection of a Sheldrick worker.

IF THE Ryan-Kaye victory had one clear lesson, it was this: the easy contrast of vice and virtue, professional and amateur, is much too simple. In my not unprejudiced opinion, the Riverside Democrats and their candidates were brighter, more idealistic, and more liberal than their opponents. But if they had been only a band of brave amateurs valiantly battling unscrupulous professionals, the usual issue of such encounters would have followed: the professionals would have won. The facts testify that at key points—finance,

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campaign management, and law—the Riverside Democrats had better professional guidance than did their opponents. Almost certainly the Riverside Democrats spent more money than their opponents. They probably enlisted more outside help. Yet the amateurs were indispensable as canvassers, talkers, mailers, and workers. Children were left in the custody of grandparents. Friends were ignored. Businesses were neglected. The campaign manager's brokerage partner in exasperation docked him ten cents for each incoming political call. The total was not small. By the time a couple of months of twelve-hour days had elapsed many an amateur had become a professional.

The campaign taught another lesson. Professional political organizations age and tire. One of the causes of Sheldrick's defeat was the large number of middle-aged, comfortably plump souls among his captains. Their amiability far exceeded their energy. The personal associations upon which the professional's tenure depends had been allowed to loosen. There is some question whether more energetic Sheldrick captains would have saved the day. It may be that a highly mobile urban population can be held in line politically more by appeals to issues than to personal loyalties.

What happens after the celebration ends? Immediate reaction blends feelings of letdown with a sharp increase in personal bickering. All that an idealist gets out of politics is personal prestige, but personal prestige inevitably is relative to the position of others. This is another way of saying that many people developed wounded feelings because they felt that they were insufficiently appreciated. Maneuvering began with a view to the next club elections. All of this was inevitable, for the strain of disinterested activity is too great for anyone to bear very long.

As this is written in January, these personal rivalries do not threaten the club's future. However, they reflect in part a number of unresolved questions. One is the relation between the major elements of the winning coalition. Neither the intellectuals nor the Blaikie element are strong enough to win another primary election. Yet neither is really sympathetic to the other. The original Riverside Democrats would like to see more discussion of state and national issues, and more consideration of state and national candidates. One adherent of this group suggested a seminar on political factions. And it is surely possible to imagine programs attractive enough to recruit members of the university community. Indeed, one view would suggest that unless such members are drawn in, the club will drift in the direction of the Blaikie group, which is more interested in traditional club objectives. Yet the opposition is not complete. There are people like Pauline Weinreb, a leader among the Blaikie people and a tireless worker for the Riverside Democrats, who sincerely admire the younger Riverside Democrats and do their best to work with them. The usual charge against liberals in politics is that their involvement is transitory. In the end, the dull work of politics is distasteful and they drift away. If the charge has any force here, it implies that the intellectual vigor of the club may depend upon its ability to recruit fifty or so young professionals and university teachers annually to replace those who drop out.

A second unresolved issue centers on the relation between the club and the district leaders. In the traditional club the district leader is boss. It is his club. The title of the Tammany club of the district, the William J. Sheldrick Association, makes the point plainly. The Riverside Democrats have different aims. Legally, of course, they cannot reverse the usual relation and make the district leaders their own. Legally, the two district leaders represent 22,000 enrolled Democrats, not two hundred club members. But if the district leader has no obligation to heed the club, the club has no obligation to endorse the district leader for reelection. Therefore a strong, independent club has the opportunity to make its views felt. Although none of these remarks implies that Ryan aspires to make the Riverside Democrats his personal

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property, they do identify an instability in the relationship capable of causing trouble.

One current uncertainty is Ryan's political future. Here is a man who deserves to advance politically and possesses the ambition to do so. But his immediate propects are unclear. A political ally, Dan Kelly, occupies the Assembly seat which might make a reasonable next objective. Other offices depend upon the good will of the official party leadership. An election promise not to accept patronage seems to limit appointive possibilities. In the meantime, however, he must make a living.

WHAT can be said to be the future of the Riverside Democrats? At least four alternative emphases are conceivable. The club could become a more respectable alternative to the Sheldrick organization. It could accept appointive posts for its members and soft-pedal its insurgency. The patronage issue can be oversimplified. Most patronage jobs demand genuine effort. The jobs have to be done by someone. The level of public administration in the city would rise if more people like the Riverside Democrats accepted office. If this alternative were pursued or drifted into, the club would almost inevitably move under the control of the district leader. It would come to resemble in the realities of power and influence the Sheldrick and the Blaikie organizations.

The club could concentrate upon local improvement. If the analysis so far is accurate, it was a local issue, Manhattantown, which did most to win. Local issues might permit readier agreement between the ex-Blaikie elements and the newer intellectual group than the more abstract questions of political principle implicit in larger issues. In fact, the major activity of the club since the primary has been the inspection of some of the more dilapidated buildings of the area, pressure upon city departments for action, and preparation of an admirably detailed report. It is possible that a series of activities focused upon schools and parks, as well as housing, could engage the activities of all club groups.

Another emphasis is longer run. The hard-boiled view might be taken that effective improvement in community amenities depends upon the election of the best candidates to public office, and that the selection of these candidates depends primarily on the New York County Committee and secondarily upon the pressures posed by individual political clubs. Hence the club will achieve its purposes only as other districts choose like-minded district leaders. In the meantime, the club might do well to devote more time to national than to local issues. Closely allied to this position is the thought that the primary purpose of a club like the Riverside Democrats is educative. It should train its members to greater understanding of the political process and political issues. Ultimately it might play the same role as a cadre for the launching of political insurgency as the Lexington Club played in its own success.

Choices in logic are clearer than they are in life. In all likelihood, the Riverside Democrats will not deliberately choose any of these paths. Nor will they necessarily concentrate on one task. For one thing, a club too austerely dedicated to national issues might lose the next leadership contest. For another, it might turn into the same sort of debating society as many chapters of the ADA. For a third, there is something to be said for a political club as pluralist as the society it finds itself in. Neither will logic determine the shape of the relationship between leader and club. Institutional pressures and personalities will swing the decision. It is a fair prediction that the Riverside Democrats will not soon vanish. It is an intriguing question what they will be like a year from now.

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JEWISH MESSIANISM AND THE IDEA OF PROGRESS

Exile and Redemption in the Cabbala

GERSHOM SCHOLEM

THE 19th century, and 19th-century Judaism, have bequeathed to the modern mind a complex of ideas about Messianism that have led to distortions and counterfeits from which it is by no means easy to free ourselves. We have been taught that the Messianic idea is part and parcel of the idea of the progress of the human race in the universe, that redemption is achieved by man's unassisted and continuous progress, leading to the ultimate liberation of all the goodness and nobility hidden within him. This, in essence, is the content which the Messianic ideal acquired under the combined dominance of religious and political liberalism—the result of an attempt to adapt the Messianic conceptions of the prophets and of Jewish religious tradition to the ideals of the French Revolution.

Traditionally, however, the Messianic ideal in Judaism was not so cheerful; the coming of the Messiah was supposed to shake the foundations of the world. In the view of the prophets and Aggadists, redemption would only follow upon a universal revolutionary disturbance, unparalleled disasters in which history would be dislodged and destroyed. The 19th-century view is blind to this catastrophic aspect. It looks only to progress toward infinite perfection. In probing into the roots of this new conception of the Messianic ideal as man's infinite progress and perfectibility, we find, surprisingly, that they stem from the Cabbala.*

When we study the Messianic ideal we simultaneously study the nature of the Diaspora, the Galut. The medieval Jew thought of redemption as a state that would be brought about by the reversal of all that had produced Galut. The Messianic ideal of the prophets of the Bible and other classical Jewish sources provided no precedent for this view. Both prophets and Aggadists conceived of redemption as a new state of the world wholly unrelated to anything that had gone before, not the product of a purifying development of the preceding state. Hence for them the world unredeemed and the world in process of redemption were separated by an abyss. History was not a *development* toward any goal. History would reach its terminus, and the new state that ensued would be the result of a totally new manifestation of the Divine. In the prophets this stage is called the "Day of the Lord," which is wholly unlike other days: it can only arrive after the old structure has been razed.

THE idea that the exile of the Jewish people from their homeland was symbolic of the condition of the universe as a whole has lately been revived in Zionist thought (see Lucy S. Dawidowicz's review of Ben Halpern's *The American Jew* elsewhere in this issue). GERSHOM SCHOLEM, one of the greatest living Jewish scholars, here traces the source of that idea to the Lurianic Cabbala, a mystical philosophy that came into being in the 16th century to explain the expulsion of the Jews from Spain. Professor Scholem was born in Germany, but settled in Palestine in 1923, and has been professor of Jewish Mysticism at the Hebrew University since 1927. He is the author of *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (1941) and a definitive study in Hebrew of the Sabbatean movement, of which the first two volumes were published last year. The present article was translated from the Hebrew by Moses Hadas.

*Cabbala is, of course, Hebrew mysticism, but it should not be thought of as a single system or doctrine; it is rather a religious movement which, in the long span of its development from the 12th century, when it first appeared in southern France, down to our own times, has embraced numerous and diverse systems. It possesses no permanent unity of content, though we may speak of a certain dynamic unity of permanent function, a unity rather in questions posed than in answers given.

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Accordingly, upon the advent of the "Day of the Lord" all that man has built up in history will be destroyed.

Classical Jewish tradition is fond of emphasizing the catastrophic strain in redemption. If we look at the tenth chapter of the tractate Sanhedrin, where the Talmudists discuss the question of redemption at length, we see that to them it means a colossal uprooting, destruction, revolution, disaster, with nothing of development or progress about it. "The Son of David [the Messiah] will come only in a generation wholly guilty or a generation wholly innocent"—a condition beyond the realm of human possibility. Or "the Son of David will not come until the kingdom is subverted to heresy." These hopes for redemption always show a very strong nationalistic bent. Liberation of Israel is the essence, but it will march in step with the liberation of the whole world.

It is well known that the whole broad area of Messianic expectations which appear in the Aggadic tradition and in midrashim was not deemed worthy of systematic treatment by the great Jewish philosophers and theologians of the Middle Ages (with the sole exception of Saadiah Gaon in the 10th century). Thus popular imagination and the religious impulse were left free to dream their own dreams and think their own thoughts, without encountering the opposition of the enlightened part of the community. A whole popular literature grew up in the Middle Ages which prophesied the final apocalyptic war that would bring history to an end, and vividly pictured redemption as the crowning event in the national and communal saga. In this way, Messianic expectation, looked down upon by the intellectual aristocracy, struck roots among the masses of the people, diverting their minds from efforts to solve the problems of the present to the utopian realm of the "Day of the Lord."

The early Cabbalists—from the 12th century until the expulsion from Spain in 1492—had little to add to the popular myth of redemption, for their faces were turned not to the End of Days but to the primal days of creation. They hoped for a particular and mystical redemption for each individual, to be achieved by escaping from the turbulence, perplexity, chaos, and storms of the actual course of history to the beginnings of history.

These early Cabbalists assigned special importance to such questions as: What is the nature of creation? and: Whence have we come? For they believed that to know the "ladder of ascent," or more precisely, the ladder of descent, the order of rungs which link all creatures downward from the source of creation, from God, "the root of all roots," down to our own straitened existence—to know the secret of our beginnings, whence the imperfections of this distorted and dark world in which we are stranded, with all the storms and perturbations and afflictions within it—to know all this would teach us the way back to "our inward home." Just as we have descended, just as every creature descends by its particular path, so is it able also to ascend, and this ascent aims at a return to the origin of creation and not to its end. Here, then, we have a view of redemption in which the foundations of the world are not moved by great Messianic disturbances. Instead, the world itself is rejected by ascent upon the rungs of the ladder which rises to the heavenly mansions in the bosom of God. The Cabbalist who was prepared to follow this path of inwardness would be liberated and redeemed by the fact that he himself in the depths of his own soul would seek a way of return to God, to the source whence he was hewn.

The masterpiece of Spanish Cabbalism is the Zohar, which was written in the last quarter of the 13th century in Castile, the central part of Spain. In this book Cabbala and Messianism are not yet dovetailed into a genuinely organic whole. On the subject of redemption we find utterances that give expression in new form and with the addition of interesting details, but without essential change, to the prophecies of the end recorded in the popular apocalyptic literature referred to above.

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The Zohar follows Talmudic Aggadah in seeing redemption not as the product of inward progress in the historical world, but as a supernatural miracle involving the gradual illumination of the world by the light of the Messiah. It begins with an initial gleam and ends with full revelation: the light of the Messiah.

> At the time when the Holy One, blessed be He, shall set Israel upright and bring them up out of Galut He will open to them a small and scant window of light, and then He will open another that is larger, until He will open to them the portals on high to the four directions of the universe. So shall it be with all that the Holy One, blessed be He, does for Israel and for the righteous among them, so shall it be and not at a single instant, for neither does healing come to a sick man at a single instant, but gradually, until he is made strong.

The Gentiles (who are designated Esau or Edom), however, will suffer the opposite fate. They received their light in this world at a single stroke, but it will depart from them gradually until Israel shall grow strong and destroy them. And when the spirit of uncleanliness shall pass from the world and the Divine light shall shine upon Israel without let or hindrance, all things will return to their proper order—to the state of perfection which prevailed in the Garden of Eden before Adam sinned. The worlds will all be joined one to another and nothing will separate Creator from creature. All will rise upward by ascents of the spirit, and creatures will be purified until they behold the *Shechinah* "eye to eye."

In the latest section of the Zohar, this prophecy is supplemented by another foretelling the liberation of Israel from all the limitations which the yoke of the Torah has laid upon her in Galut. The author expresses his vision in the imagery of the tree of life and the tree of knowledge (from which death depends). Since Adam sinned, the world has been governed not by the tree of life (as it properly should be) but by the tree of knowledge. The tree of life is entirely and exclusively holy, with no admixture of evil, no adulteration or impurity or death or limitation. The tree of knowledge, on the other hand, contains both good and evil, purity and impurity, virtue and vice, and therefore under its rule, there are things forbidden and things permitted, things fit for consumption and things unfit, the clean and the unclean. In an unredeemed world the Torah is revealed in positive and negative commandments and all that these imply, but in the redeemed future uncleanliness and unfitness and death will be abolished. In an unredeemed world the Torah must be interpreted in manifold ways—literal, allegorical, mystical; but in the redeemed future it will be revealed in the pure spirituality of the tree of life, without the "clothing" it put on after Adam sinned. It will be wholly inward, entirely holy.

In this conception, redemption becomes a spiritual revolution which will uncover the mystic meaning, the "true interpretation," of the Torah. Thus a mystic utopia takes the place of the national and secular utopia of the early writers. But the author of these latest sections bestows special emphasis on the opposition between the Torah of the Galut and the Torah of the redemption without indicating any transition between them. The two states of the world were still separated by a chasm which history could never bridge.

THE efforts of the Spanish Cabbalists had been bent upon a new understanding of Judaism. They re-examined Jewish life, the life of the commandments, the world of the Halachah, no less than of the Aggadah, delving into the mystery of the Torah, of man's works in this world, of his relation to God. In these matters their convictions had no vital connection with the theme of redemption. But on the heels of the expulsion from Spain, the Cabbala underwent a pronounced shift which was of momentous consequences for Jewish history generally, even more than for Cabbala itself. Just as the Cabbala of the 13th century sought to interpret Judaism in a way that would enable a 13th- or 14th-century man to be a Jew according to the religious conceptions of that period, so after the expulsion from Spain

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the Cabbala sought to provide an answer for questions which arose from an event which had uprooted one of the principal branches of Judaism.

But the attempt to reinterpret the nature of the universe and of Judaism in the light of this experience was not made in the years immediately following the catastrophe of 1492. The Cabbalists, like their fellow Jews in general, believed that complete redemption was around the corner. In the expulsion from Spain they saw the beginnings of the "travail of the Messiah"—the beginnings of those disasters and frightful afflictions which would terminate history and usher in the redemption. There was no need for new religious concepts and principles; the end had already come. At any hour, any moment, the gates of redemption might swing open, and men's hearts must now be awakened to meet the future. For the span of one generation, during the forty years after the Spanish expulsion, we find a deep Messianic excitement and tension almost as intense as before the eruption of the Sabbatean movement. Traditional principles remained untouched; the teaching of the early Cabbala continued without basic change; the important thing now was propaganda, the dissemination of the apocalyptic message.

The master propagandist of this acute Messianism in the generation after the Spanish expulsion was Abraham ben Eliezer ha-Levi, a rabbi from Spain who lived in Jerusalem and was one of the great Cabbalists of his day. On the basis of all Hebrew literature, from the book of Daniel to the Zohar and the writings of the medieval sages, he proved that the travails of redemption had already begun in 1492 and would end in full glory in 1531. We have other such ingenious books dating from the same period. The teaching of one of them, *Kaf ha-K'toret* ("Spoon of Incense"), an anonymous commentary on the book of Psalms (which is extant only in manuscripts), runs like this:

> According to the words of the sages the Torah has seventy aspects, and there are seventy aspects to each and every verse; in truth, therefore, the aspects are infinite. In each generation one of these aspects is revealed, and so in our generation the aspect which the Torah reveals to us concerns matters of redemption. Each and every verse can be understood and explained in reference to redemption.

According to this author, every single verse in the Book of Psalms refers to the imminent redemption, and he declares that all the lyrics in the Psalms are battle songs of the final apocalyptic war. That a devout Jew should consider the Psalms as battle hymns is evidence of the depth of the new feelings which had seized the Jews upon the expulsion. But the implication is still that the notions of Galut and redemption do not require new interpretation.

The redemption, however, did not come, only disaster and travail, and all these powerful expectations were frustrated. And in the measure that hope was disappointed in the external world, the spiritual effects of the Spanish expulsion sought expression in the deeper reaches of the soul. The weight of the event gradually sank, as it were, from the outer strata of man to the deeper strata in the soul, to more fertile strata out of which are formed new visions and new symbols. The prophecy of the imminent end waned, and men began to think the matter out anew. Only then did there begin a movement which involved setting up a new religious climate around the ideas of Galut and redemption.

WHAT now took place can be defined as the merging of two hitherto disparate forces—the Messianic theme and Cabbala—into a unified whole. In other words, the Messianic theme became a productive element in the speculations of the mystics themselves. They began to seek explanations for the expulsion from Spain: What had happened? What brought on the affliction and suffering? What is the nature of this gloomy world of Galut? They sought an answer to such questions in terms of their basic mystical outlook, which regarded all external being as the sign and symbol of the inward being that speaks through it. And by connecting the notions of Galut and re-

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demption with the central question of the essence of the universe, they managed to elaborate a system which transformed the exile of the people of Israel into an exile of the whole world, and the redemption of their people into a universal, cosmic redemption.

The result was that the Cabbala succeeded in establishing its predominance over the broad masses of the Jewish people. This is a phenomenon which has always puzzled scholars. How did a movement so highly mystical, individual, and aristocratic as the Cabbala become a social and historical force, a dynamic power in history? At least part of the explanation is that the 16th-century Cabbala found in the expulsion itself a way of answering the most urgent question confronting the Jews of that period: the nature of Galut and the nature of redemption.

This answer was formulated during the span of a single generation, from 1540 to 1580, by a small, albeit very intense, congregation of saints, devotees, priests, and reformers in the little Palestinian town of Safed. Since the question of Galut and redemption was everywhere troublesome in the same measure, and since the various Jewish communities throughout the world were still more or less homogeneous, it was possible for the definitive answer given at Safed to be accepted as relevant in all parts of the Galut.

Of the many systems formulated in Safed, the one which was most highly respected and which achieved authoritative status, both among mystics and the masses of the people, was the Cabbala of Rabbi Isaac Luria Ashkenazi (1534-1572), later called the Ari ("the Lion").

The Ari's basic conceptions are pictorial in character and work upon the imagination, and though their original formulation was quite simple, they lent themselves to extremely subtle and profound interpretation. The Galut the Ari's Cabbala saw as a terrible and pitiless state permeating and embittering all of Jewish life, but Galut was also the condition of the universe as a whole, even of the deity. This is an extremely bold idea, and when the Lurianic Cabbalists came to speak of it, they shuddered at their own audacity, hedging it with such deprecatory expressions as "one might suppose," "as it were," "to stun the ear." Nevertheless, the idea was developed through the three central conceptions which shape the Lurianic system—*limitation, destruction, reparation.*

ACCORDING to the Ari and his school, the universe was created by an action of which the ancients generally were ignorant. God did not reveal Himself overtly in creation, but confined and concealed Himself, and by so doing enabled the world to be revealed. Then came the second act, the fashioning of the universal "emanations," the creations of the worlds, the revelation of the Divine as mankind's deity, as the Creator, as the God of Israel.

The original phase of concealment carries many implications. There is voluntary restraint and limitation, something related to the quality of harshness and rigidity in God, for all concentration and limitation imply the functioning of this quality. There is ruthlessness toward Himself, for He exiled Himself from boundless infinity to a more concentrated infinity. There is a profound inward Galut, not the Galut of one of the creatures but of God Himself, who limited Himself and thereby made place for the universe. This is the Lurianic concept of limitation or concentration, *tsimtsum,* which supplanted the simpler idea of creation held by the Spanish Cabbalists.

To the question of how the world came into being the Spanish Cabbalists had proffered their doctrine of emanations. From the abundance of His being, from the treasure laid up within Himself, God "emanated" the *sephirot,* those divine luminaries, those modes and stages through which He manifests Himself externally. His resplendent light emanates from stage to stage, and the light spreads to ever wider spheres and becomes light ever more thickened. Through the descent of the lights from their infinite source all the worlds were emanated and created; our world is but the last and out-

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ward shell of the layers of Divine glory. The process of creation is thus something like progressive revelation.

In the system of the Ari, the notion of concentration supplies a greater complexity. In order for a thing other than God to come into being, God must necessarily retreat within Himself. Only afterward does He emit beams of light into the vacuum of limitation and build our world. Moreover, at each stage there is need for both the force of limitation and the force of emanation. Without limitation everything would revert to the Divine, and without emanation nothing would come into being. Nothing that exists can be uniform, everything has this basic Janus character—the limiting force and the emanating force, retreat and propagation. Only the concurrence of the two disparate motifs can produce being.

The concept of limitation seems paradoxical, but it has vitality; it expresses the notion of a living God—a God thought of as a living organism. But let us consider the continuation of this process.

God was revealed in His potencies and His various attributes (justice, mercy, etc., etc.). By these powers through which He willed to effect creation He formed "vessels" destined to serve the manifestation of His own being. (It is a binding rule that whatever wishes to act or manifest itself requires garbs and vessels, for without them it would revert to infinity which has no differentiation and no stages.) The Divine light entered these vessels in order to take forms appropriate to their function in creation, but the vessels could not contain the light and thus were broken. This is the phase which the Cabbalists call the "breaking of the vessels." And what was the consequence of the shattering of the vessels? The light was dispersed. Much of it returned to its source; some portions, or "sparks," fell downward and were scattered, some rose upward.

This "breaking" introduces a dramatic aspect into the process of creation, and it can explain the Galut. Henceforth nothing is perfect. The divine light which should have subsisted in specific forms and in places appointed for it from the beginning is no longer in its proper place because the vessels were broken, and thereafter all things went awry. There is nothing that was not damaged by the breaking. Nothing is in the place appointed for it; everything is either below or above, but not where it should be. In other words, all being is in Galut.

And this is not all. Into the deep abyss of the forces of evil, the forces of darkness and impurity which the Cabbalists call "shells" or "offscourings," there fell, as a result of the breaking of the vessels, forces of holiness, sparks of Divine light. Hence there is a Galut of the Divine itself, of the "sparks of the Shechinah": "These sparks of holiness are bound in fetters of steel in the depths of the shells, and yearningly aspire to rise to their source but cannot avail to do so until they have support"—so says Rabbi Chaim Vital, a disciple of Luria.

Here we have a cosmic picture of Galut, not the Galut of the people of Israel alone, but the Galut of the Shechinah at the very inception of its being. All that befalls in the world is only an expression of this primal and fundamental Galut. All existence, including, "as it were," God, subsists in Galut. Such is the state of creation after the breaking of the vessels.

NEXT comes *reparation*, the third juncture in the great process: the breaking can be healed. The primal flaw must be mended so that all things can return to their proper place, to their original posture. Man and God are partners in this enterprise. After the original breaking God began the process of reparation, but He left its completion to man. If Adam had not sinned the world would have entered the Messianic state on the first Sabbath after creation, with no historical process whatever. Adam's sin returned the universe, which had almost been amended, to its former broken state. What happened at the breaking of the vessels happened again. Again the worlds fell. Adam—who at first was a cosmic, spiritual, supernal being, a soul which contained all souls—fell from his station, whereupon the Divine light in

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his soul was dispersed. Henceforward even the light of the soul would be imprisoned in a dungeon with the sparks of the Shechinah under a single doom. All being was again scattered in Galut. In all the expanse of creation there is imperfection, flaw, Galut.

The Galut of Israel is only the expression —compelling, concrete, and extremely cruel— of this phase of the world before reparation and redemption. The predicament of Israel, then, is not a historical accident but inherent in the world's being, and it is in Israel's power to repair the universal flaw. By amending themselves, the Jewish people can also amend the world, in its visible and invisible aspects alike. How can this be done? Through the Torah and the commandments. These are the secret remedies which by their spiritual action move things to their ordained station, free the imprisoned Divine light and raise it to its proper level, liberate the sparks of Shechinah from the domination of the "offscourings," complete the figure of the Creator to the full measure of His stature, which is now wanting in perfection, "as it were," because of the Galut of the Shechinah. Through the "discernment" of good and evil, a decisive boundary is fixed between the areas of the holy and the unclean which became mixed up at the original breaking and then again when Adam sinned. Galut, then, is a mission for emendation and clarification. The children of Israel "lift up the sparks" not only from the places trodden by their feet in their Galut, but also, by their deeds, from the cosmos itself.

Every man amends his own soul, and by the process of transmigration that of his neighbor. This is a crucial item in the doctrine of the "selection" of goodness from its exile in the spheres of evil. Belief in transmigration spread as a popular belief only upon the heels of the movement which emanated from Safed from the middle of the 16th century onward. The causes are easy to understand. In the system of the new Cabbalists, transmigration was not an appendage but an inextricable basic element. Transmigration, too, symbolized the state of the unamended world, the confusion of the orders of creation which was consequent upon Adam's sin. Just as bodies are in Galut, so also there is inward Galut for souls. And "Galut of souls" is transmigration. Isaiah Horovitz, one of the great Cabbalists of this school writes: "In the blessing 'Sound Thou a great shofar for our liberation' we pray for the ingathering of the souls scattered to the four corners of the earth in their transmigrations . . . and also in 'Gather Thou our scattered from amongst the nations'; these apply to the ingathering of the Galut of souls which have been dispersed." Every living being is subject to the law of transmigration from form to form. There is no being, not even the lowliest, which may not serve as a prison for the sparks of the "banished souls" seeking restoration from their Galut.

In this system, redemption is synonymous with emendation or restoration. After we have fulfilled our duty and the emendation is completed, and all things occupy their appropriate places in the universal scheme, then redemption will come *of itself*. Redemption merely signifies the perfect state, a flawless and harmonious world in which everything occupies its proper place. Hence the Messianic ideal, the ideal of redemption, receives a totally new aspect. We all work, or are at least expected to work, for the amendment of the world and the "selection" of good and evil. This provides an ideology for the commandments and the life of Halachah—an ideology which connects traditional Judaism with the hidden forces operating in the world at large. A man who observes a commandment is no longer merely observing a commandment: his act has a universal significance, he is amending something.

This conception of redemption is no longer catastrophic: when duty has been fulfilled the son of David, the Messiah, will come of himself, for his appearance at the End of Days is only a symbol for the completion of a process, a testimony that the world has in fact been amended. Thus it becomes possible to avoid the "travails of the Messiah." The transition from the state of imperfection to the state of perfection

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(which may still be very difficult) will nevertheless take place without revolution and disaster and great affliction.

Here, for the first time, we have an organic connection between the state of redemption and the state preceding it. Redemption now appears not as the opposite of all that came before, but as the logical consequence of the historical process. We are all involved in one Messianic venture, and we all are called up to do our part.

The Messiah himself will not bring the redemption; rather he symbolizes the advent of redemption, the completion of the task of emendation. It is therefore not surprising that little importance is given to the human personality of the Messiah in Lurianic literature, for these Cabbalists had no special need of a personal Messiah. But like all mystics, they were at once conservatives and radicals. Since tradition spoke of a personal Messiah they accepted him while revolutionizing the content of the traditional idea.

We have, then, a complete array of conceptions in the new Cabbala which show an inner logic. Galut and redemption are not historical manifestations peculiar to Israel, but manifestations of all being, up to and including the mystery of Divinity itself. The Messiah here becomes the entire people of Israel rather than an individual redeemer: the people of Israel as a whole prepares itself to amend the primal flaw. Redemption is a consequence of antecedents and not of revolution, and though the redemption of Israel in the national and secular sense remained a very real ideal, it was widened and deepened by making it the symbol of the redemption of the whole world, the restoration of the universe to the state it was to have attained when the Creator planned its creation.

The new Cabbala had a very important function in restoring to the Jew his sense of responsibility and his dignity. He could now look upon his state, whether in Galut or in the Messianic hope, as the symbol of a profound mystery which reached as high as God, and he could relate the fundamental experiences of his life to all cosmic being and its integration. He saw no contradiction between the nationalist and secular aspect of redemption, and its mystic and universalist aspect. In the conviction of the Cabbalists the former served to adumbrate and symbolize the latter. The anguish of the historical experience of Galut was not blurred by this new interpretation; on the contrary, it may be said to have been emphasized and sharpened. But now there was added a conviction that the secret of Israel's anguish was rooted in the hidden sources of the vital sustenance of all creation.

READING ROUSSET'S "L'UNIVERS CONCENTRATIONNAIRE"

IRVING FELDMAN

Who holds my book and turns the page?
Thinking of my brother Jews
I have crossed over the edge
And as one dead walk among the dead.
Who is it sits to read?
Now that I wander like a shade
Bitter and free. Yet I who am ash
Fear they'll purge smoke as they did flesh
As even I forgot our death.
Who heaves my chest? who would draw my breath?

Irving Feldman's poem "The Saint" was printed in our December 1956 number. Mr. Feldman is working on a translation of Jules Laforgue.

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CAN EUROPE BE UNITED?

A British View of the Continent

MAX BELOFF

THE ratification of the "Euratom" and "Common Market" treaties, and the prospect of their coming into force in less than a year's time, has given a new urgency to the problem of the form that the unity of Western Europe should take, and to the question of how far geographically its boundaries ought to extend. There is now an awareness of the possible obsolescence of postwar ideas of defense, and a hope that a new effort at understanding with the East might permit some lessening in the rigidity of the division separating the two halves of Europe.

Conversely, it is becoming more obvious that the basic questions of defense have to be settled in a non-European context, and that the development of federal or quasi-federal institutions in Western Europe is not likely to affect this issue in the way many people previously hoped that it would. In other words, the unification of Western Europe will not substantially relieve the United States of its share in the burden of defense. Even if the hope of relaxation be an illusion, the mere discussion of it has revealed that it is by no means only the Germans who cannot accept as a permanent political frontier the line of demarcation between the victorious armies of 1945.

In the present discussion we are concerned with the political and economic problems that are raised by the recent agreements between the six countries (France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg) which already cooperate in the working of one supra-national body, the Coal and Steel Community. These six countries have, almost from the beginning of the postwar period, distinguished themselves from the wider Western European grouping (represented in such organs as OEEC and the Council of Europe) by their professed willingness to sink their national identities in an ultimately federal structure, and have sought to find a way toward this goal by creating institutions capable under certain conditions of overriding the national governments themselves. In the most ambitious of these arrangements, the recently signed "Common Market" treaty, they have undertaken—on the model of the Coal and Steel Community—to abolish by stages all internal barriers to trade and simultaneously to establish a uniform tariff against the outside world. At the same time, various institutions are to be set up to cushion the several economies against some of the changes that are bound to ensue, and to equalize conditions of competition within the Common Market.

This kind of arrangement conforms to the American idea that the European economies suffer from too restricted domestic markets, and since the ultimate aim is a total customs union and not "preferences," it does not flout the American insistence upon non-discrimination. On the other hand, it would be well to realize that the market itself will be sheltered behind a tariff higher than that levied by several of its present members, so that its contribution to a general freeing of world trade—another American objective—is more dubious. And if a federal govern-

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THE prospects of European unity are here critically examined by a well-known British historian and expert on international affairs who has himself participated in European gatherings since the war. MAX BELOFF has recently been appointed Gladstone Professor of Government and Public Administration at Oxford. His article "Anti-Colonialism in American Foreign Policy" appeared in the September 1957 COMMENTARY.

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ment did appear at the apex of these new arrangements, its general attitude would certainly not be one of laissez-faire.

AGAINST the federal objective there has always been an alternative line of development, of which Britain and the Scandinavian countries have been the principal exponents. This has been based upon the assumption that political decisions would have to remain in the hands of individual governments, parliaments, and electorates, and that what was primarily needed was more regular consultation and the establishment of international agencies, rather than of supra-national institutions. This has sometimes been called the "confederal" approach; but the term has misleading connotations. The difference in the present phase is represented by the idea of an organization for cooperation in the use of atomic energy much looser than that envisaged by "the Six" in Euratom, and a "Free Trade Area" as a complement to the "Common Market." Under the proposed "Free Trade Area" which would include the countries of the Common Market, its members would abolish the tariffs on goods produced in the Area, but would keep their separate external tariffs. Furthermore, they would not set up the elaborate supra-national machinery that the Common Market treaty provides for, largely on French insistence. Americans may feel that the larger area with its bigger internal market is the more promising of the two, though it can less easily be reconciled with the principle of non-discrimination. The point would seem to be that one cannot have both: if Europe is to be federal at all, it can only be on the scale of "the Six."

Before considering why this is so, it is worth asking whether the way forward for "the Six" is as clear as their leaders profess to believe. Doubts are raised by a number of difficulties at very different levels. The most recent, at the time of writing, is the failure to agree upon a center for the new institutions that are being created. It is clear that if Europe is to have common institutions which are intended to be a government in embryo, then they ought to be situated in one city, which would gradually attain the status of Europe's capital. But the arguments advanced in the discussions were primarily based on considerations of national convenience and prestige. Even more serious is the question why, if France and Germany are so anxious to merge their economies, they should find it so difficult to overcome the disequilibrium caused by the over-valuation of the French franc. And there are yet more fundamental reasons for wondering whether the timetable envisaged for the coming into being of the Common Market will in fact be sustained. In the remarkable volume which M. Charles Morazé has contributed to the new French historical series, *Destins du Monde* (a volume significantly entitled *Les Bourgeois Conquérants*), he points out how close, from the beginning, were the links between French industry and the protective patronage of the French state. A great part of French economic life is based upon a highly involved system of protection and subsidy—the principles of Adam Smith are flouted at every turn—and one is entitled to ask whether the French will permit their own government to dismantle these barriers, or to transfer power to an international authority which will do it for them. The example of coal and steel, where the political frontiers have long been recognized as irrelevant to efficient organization by the producers themselves, is not perhaps a precedent which should be relied upon too much.

Again, there is a clear difference in emphasis between France's desire to secure further capital for economic development in overseas areas under her control, and the unwillingness of her European partners to get caught up in the apparently insoluble tragedy of France's relations with the North African countries. And to take a case with more political than economic significance, while Holland's European partners may well sympathize with her in the dilemma created by the quite absurdly gratuitous claim of Indonesia to Western New Guinea, and deplore the impertinent attitude of a recently emancipated country that cannot even gov-

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ern itself, they cannot feel as deeply touched by this as the Netherlanders themselves.

As soon as one begins to discuss any of these issues with people from the countries concerned—to say nothing of debating German reunification with a German—one sees that they are thinking in national rather than in European terms; if "Europe" comes in, it is likely to be as an adjunct to national policy, not as something which makes national aspirations and problems irrelevant. But even supposing these difficulties can be overcome—where do "the Six" get to then? With the Coal and Steel Community, the Common Market, and Euratom all functioning and all controlled by a directly elected European parliamentary body, the decisive steps toward political federation may well have been taken—if we assume (and it is a big assumption) that common defense will have been taken care of by NATO. But are the people of "the Six" really prepared for the consequences—would France or West Germany or Italy really envisage for themselves the political independence of California, or even of Quebec? If Strasbourg or Luxembourg or Brussels is to be the "capital of Europe," will Paris and Rome agree to being assimilated to the status of Sacramento? If the protagonists of the Europe of "the Six" were to say "no," it would not be possible to blame them for it. The trouble is that they say things which can only be interpreted as meaning "yes"; and one feels that either they are deceiving us, or more likely they are deceiving themselves and somehow believe that federation can add to the strength of the component units without demanding from them any parallel sacrifices of autonomy or prestige.

But taking it that they do mean what they say, and that they are determined upon federation, what then do they rely on as the motive force for overcoming these blocks in the road? One very general and generous sentiment that undoubtedly inspired the movement in its early period was the feeling that France and Germany must never go to war again. There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of that determination on either side. But other developments in the world have made such a war unthinkable anyhow, unless the two countries were to be swallowed up in rival power-blocs. The scale of France and Germany in the atomic age makes the whole issue of war between them as sovereign units an entirely anachronistic one; and it would not be necessary for them to enter into a federation in order to avoid it.

One has to look for something less specific but at the same time more relevant; and this can only be found in the desire to build up a new political unit based upon a common ideology. This ideology cannot be based on the European idea as such. "The Six" are an important part of the Continent, but Europe is not Europe without Britain, Scandinavia, and Switzerland, without the Iberian Peninsula, without Austria, Hungary, and Poland, without the Czechs, and indeed without the Russians. The ideology is in fact a narrower one: it is the ideology of Christian Democracy. The principal political leaders of the movement, and many of its leading spokesmen, have in common a belief in the possibility of deriving a democratic form of government and policies of social welfare from the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Now the Catholic Church is a powerful institution in much of Europe, and a movement which it supports has got to be taken seriously. But its support confers not only advantages on the movement, but also handicaps. And before one assumes that the movement is going to succeed one has got to see clearly what these handicaps are. Except in Northern Ireland, the Protestant cause is hardly a fighting one in Northern Europe, but Britain and Scandinavia (the countries that have been most unwilling to follow the lead of "the Six") are the core of Protestant Europe. They have no political leaders who move easily in the world of ideas familiar to men like Dr. Adenauer, M. Robert Schuman, or the late Signor de Gasperi; and their peoples, except for a significant minority in England itself, are impervious to this particular ideology, since they largely equate Protestantism with their

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own democratic forms. Even in the more general forum of the Council of Europe, one can sense the delicacy of the religious issue.

But what is really more important than these outside repercussions is the fact that it is by no means clear that a Catholic ideology can function as a binding link within "the Six" themselves. If one takes the fact that Italy and Belgium and Luxembourg are overwhelmingly Catholic, and that France is nominally 80 per cent Catholic, one gets the impression that the Catholic Church should be able to command a very great measure of political authority in the area of "the Six." But as soon as one starts breaking down these figures into actuality, one sees the weakness of this assumption. Not only are the Catholics actually in the minority in the Netherlands and Western Germany, but even in France practicing Catholics number only about a quarter of the population, and even in Italy only a third. Of the political parties in the three large countries that claim a Christian Democratic inspiration, only the Italian one is both a party of government and strongly Catholic. The German CDU only retains its great strength by refusing to become confessional and by including an important Protestant component. In a united Germany, where the percentage of Catholics would be considerably reduced, neither this position nor its majority status might be preserved. And in France, the MRP has to divide Catholic votes with the parties of the right, and is itself only capable of acting within coalitions which incorporate parties of a very different outlook.

Furthermore, in all three countries, but particularly in France and Italy, clericalism is a real issue in politics. Large sections of the population are not merely non-Catholic (and indeed non-Christian)—they are firmly opposed to any political party that does claim the support of the Church. And among the working class of France and Italy, this anti-clericalism is an undoubted part of the appeal of Communism. Even among the German Social Democrats, the "European" policy, which has at times looked like a guarantee of the perpetuation in power of the CDU, is deeply suspect. Again, one has to look to the future as much as to the past. The more successful the measures to improve the economy of these countries, the more marked will be the progress of industrialization, particularly in Italy; and industrialization will increase the numerical weight of those social strata where the Church has the least hold. Time works against Christian Democracy.

It is a fact not always faced by those who advocate the full federation of "the Six" and a directly elected parliament as a step toward it, that the present exclusion of the Communist parties from the European assemblies will no longer be possible. So far from the Christian Democratic parties having an obedient majority there, they will be faced by a large bloc of Communists, who will possibly find in a common anti-clericalism a basis for political cooperation with other parties on the left. But quite apart from calculations of this kind, it is difficult to see how a European political union, which is intended to have among its other purposes the raising of the general level of production and productivity, can come into being with no backing from any important section of the organized working class in any of the countries concerned. The support of certain political leaders and civil servants and the enthusiasm of some intellectuals cannot, in the long run, make up for the absence of mass support. And it is noteworthy that no election campaign has yet been fought in any country of "the Six" in which one side has put "Europe" in the forefront of its appeal. Thus the coolness with which Britain and the Scandinavian countries regard the more ambitious of the federal plans of "the Six" does not arise from an outworn belief in the capacity of the European nation-states to take care of themselves, but from the fact that the supporters of these plans seem so unwilling to face the immediate political problems of their own countries, and the deep divisions that these cause

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within their own peoples. To those familiar with the practice of federalism—and the Swiss are notable absentees from all these discussions—there is too wide a gap between what the European federalists say and what the governments they represent seem willing to do.

It is thus wrong to suppose that an irresistible movement is being temporarily held up by the unwillingness of certain countries to accept the necessity for a wider union. Yet any argument on this point from a British source is bound to seem a piece of special pleading, and it may therefore be worth seeing what the British position actually is.

"FIFTEEN years ago Britain was isolated from Europe. Fifteen years hence it may be part of Europe, in a manner unprecedented in modern times." This was not said by someone enthusiastically committed to the ideology of European union; it is a quotation from a very hardheaded source indeed. It comes from a report prepared by the *Economist's* Intelligence Unit, for the use of industrial concerns and trade unions, on the probable effect upon Britain's own industry of the Common Market and the proposed addition to it of a Free Trade Area including the United Kingdom itself. The authors of this report (*Britain and Europe*, London, 1957) take the view that if the Common Market actually comes into existence without the parallel organization of the Free Trade Area, the result will be a decline in Britain's economic strength relative to that of the rest of the world. Taking into account the political and economic consequences of the alternative, they declare themselves "strongly in favor of British participation in the movement for European Free Trade."

It would be very misleading if one were to give an American audience the impression that Britain is deeply and tumultuously divided on the subject. Although some sections of the press, and some particular interests, occasionally let out a warning that Britain or the Commonwealth is being sold down the river by a European-minded government, the whole topic is far removed from what the ordinary voter, or even the ordinary Member of Parliament, has on his mind. Insofar as there is public reaction in Britain to the Free Trade Area negotiations, it is unfavorable—on the right because of domestic protectionism, or a preference for concentration on the Commonwealth; on the left because of a rather unformulated theory—which the statistics do not confirm—that the result of an agreement would be the flooding of the British market by goods produced by lower-paid labor; or at a more sophisticated level (Aneurin Bevan's), because the project would limit the possible extent of economic interventionism by a future Socialist government.

The truth seems to be that the arguments adduced by the *Economist's* Intelligence Unit have for some time been accepted by the Cabinet's own economic advisers, and by the departments concerned. The civil servants at the Board of Trade and the Treasury, for whom "interdependence" is not a slogan but a fact of their daily work—men whose background is the Marshall Plan, OEEC, and EPU, and who are accustomed to working closely on economic matters with their West European counterparts—have been convinced (and have seemingly convinced the government) that Britain has no option but to go along with her European neighbors if they are really prepared for further far-reaching measures of economic integration. Nor do they believe that the projected Free Trade Area would interfere with the particular economic relationships that exist between Britain and the countries of the Commonwealth. They had probably already noted what the *Economist's* report points out: "Intra-European trade is growing more rapidly than Britain's trade with the Commonwealth. Between 1951 and 1955, Europe's imports rose by over 20 per cent in value, the Commonwealth's by only 2 per cent. Britain can swim with this tide or against it. The plan for a Free Trade Area offers, in the sphere of economics, closer association with Europe without abandoning Britain's historical trading and financial re-

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lationship with the Commonwealth." But the government has not done anything to make these conclusions known to the British public; so far from stimulating discussion on the issues raised, it has probably welcomed the relative lack of interest that has been shown.

Americans, and others, often assume that the reason is that Britain is not yet reconciled to her decline in international status. Is it not time, they ask, that Britain gave up pretending that she stands apart from the other European powers and can still argue, if not as an equal, at least on a special footing, with the United States and the Soviet Union? There is of course something in this argument, though much less than most Americans appear to believe. From the point of view of power politics, the lesson that Britain no longer stands where she stood has by now been rammed home; in that sense the failure at Suez has certainly had its effect. The idea of the *Pax Britannica* has been rather implausible ever since it was discovered that aircraft could sink ships. One may regret the disappearance of the old British Empire, but one can hardly fail to notice it. Insofar as there is a section of opinion in Britain that has not woken up to the consequences, it is not among the old imperialists but among the old anti-imperialists, among leaders on the left who assume that the weakened Britain of today can continue to produce an ever-rising standard of living for those members of the working class who have the good fortune to be protected by strong trade unions, without any corresponding effort to adapt the economy to a newly competitive world. And it is fair to add that they have their counterparts in management.

But in general it is not true to say that there is a refusal to recognize the facts. Nor is there anything like the fierce chauvinism that a similar decline in status seems to have brought about in France. Britain is not angry —though it does not take kindly to Mr. Dulles's sermons on international morality. Instead, there is a certain tendency to feel that the whole situation is too complicated for anything useful to be done about it at all. The prospect of thermonuclear war has created not a sense of urgency about foreign policy, but a feeling of apathy. The Americans and the Russians will decide in the end; meanwhile let us cultivate our gardens! There are individual triumphs in science, technology, and production, particularly in the peaceful use of atomic energy where Britain leads the world; there is useful progress in some aspects of the movement toward the creation of a more civilized life for the masses of our people; but there is no general national sense of purpose. Political life is at a low ebb.

Since Britain cannot now retain its own position in isolation, those who have sought for some larger unity in which to seek integration have for long been balancing among three possibilities, sometimes regarded as mutually exclusive and sometimes as complementary. These are the Atlantic Alliance, meaning in particular a specially intimate Anglo-American partnership; a more tightly knit Commonwealth; and finally, "Europe." The first of these has in fact been ruled out by a quite different trend in American opinion and policy. The third is our present subject. What of the second? Here again, though there is a certain pride in the evolution of a new and growing family of independent nations, and a sincere willingness to assist the newer members of it in their economic, technical, and administrative problems—the role of the British universities in this is particularly striking—it cannot be said that the Commonwealth is a very present reality in British political life. Patrick Maitland, a Conservative Member of Parliament, has recently published a book of absorbing interest expounding the ideas of the "Expanding Commonwealth" group, which is dedicated to the notion that the Commonwealth is now flexible enough for it to be possible to contemplate the addition of further members—republics or monarchies —who could enter without any sacrifice of their own individuality. The smaller countries of Northern Europe, and Israel, are

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often mentioned in this connection. But Mr. Maitland's book has aroused nothing like the interest that it deserves. He calls it: *A Task for Giants*. And that is the trouble. The British do not wish to be giants.

For Britain's relations with Europe, the importance of the Commonwealth is not only in what is ruled out—entrance into a European federation which would make the Commonwealth machinery unworkable, since it is based on the idea of sovereign nations, and a member of a federation cannot be sovereign; nor does it lie in the field of economics, since the Free Trade Area could be reconciled with the further development of Commonwealth trade with continental Europe, as well as with the United Kingdom. It is much more a consequence of the kind of approach to the question of European unity that Commonwealth experience itself suggests.

The British feel that they understand two forms of political organization in which the interests of individual units are reconciled with those of wider communities of which they form part. One is federal government in its classical form. The other is free consultation and cooperation, as between the Commonwealth countries themselves. From this point of view, the proposed Free Trade Area is simply an extreme example of a willingness to harmonize national policies for the common good. It may well be argued that in a situation where the boundaries of Europe are still indeterminate, and where no one wishes to close avenues to a wider future, arrangements of this limited kind deserve encouragement and support.

IN THE GRAY LIGHT

(for my sister Esther)

ELIEZER GREENBERG

A THIN layer of gray hair, broad forehead,
Deeply grooved, eyes eternally in awe,
Proud morbidity washed in a sheen of tears
(The last an inheritance from my mother's house,
From my father the passion for verse),

I stand and, straining, scrutinize my image.
The more I look, the more it seems
My father is come to me
(From the other edge of the bloody sea),
That he, not I, stand framed, the gray one, in the mirror.

The clouds are heavy on his deepened eyes.
His mouth is locked, but his lips, like mine, quiver,
And like mine, his shoulders, too, are stooped.
There is something here of the meek and the proud
And he cannot, as I cannot, seek a way out.

I stand fixed. I take a step, toward, away; he follows.
He mimics every movement I make, every gesture.
He looks on me, compassionately, as if with the sorrows
Of the secret only death reveals, revealing,
In new and sacred light, the meaning of life—after life.

A warm familiar breath, steeped in the smells of stale tobaccos,
Takes me. I feel a homely, painful peacefulness. The years roll back for me:
I go to *cheder*, I'm the boy at the Bible. Jacob flees Esau.
Now is the Sabbath. Now it is a weekday. Now again the end of the week.
I inhale my mother's gentle face. I am again the child in the cradle.

Now I am Bar Mitzvah, and now a ship takes me
Across the seas. And now I am alone, separated, in a strange country.
Strange people, a strange tongue, envelop me in fear.

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Strangled days, hungry nights, the
loneliness. . . .
Now a letter—our father is dead, murdered.

What brings my father's image to me now
in this darkening,
In this grayed bereavement? I begin to shout,
As in a trance: "Oh, my father, what has
brought you here?"
Darker evening erases feature after feature
of the image in the mirror,
And deep within me wakes the ancient
struggle of Cain and Abel.

My father is tender, patient:
"Oh, my son, I did not come to ask reward,
revenge,
For the unpurposed, the premature, end of
my years. That was long ago—long ago.
Time, no doubt, has already covered with
layer on layer of forgetting
My brief stay on this bloody soil, this
earth, this vale of tears.

"And yet there is a time when every crooked
road is straightened,
When the break between the just and the
injustice, between the young and the old
disappears,
And what you have is the clean profit, the
everything that made what is life
Rich and real. The rest—sheaf of days and
nights, plucked helter-skelter,
The dry foliage the forest throws off in the
heart of its blossoming.

"Both father and son thirst deeply for
the ultimate compact,
Dream of the covenant, when the hot sun
and the cool evening
Clasp hands in the sacred promise, and
the essence of forever,
Drained of suspicion, drained of fear—
ripens in the meeting
Born of singing, born of compassion,
born of love."

The Abel in me is meek, but his eyes are
on me
And he charges me, pits me with the spike of
his mute accusations: Fratricide!
The Cain in me rages: "You're my partner!"
He froths at the mouth, ecstatic, drunk,
No touch of regret: "Man is an animal,
primeval, he belongs to the woods.
One choice: Kill or be killed! Freedom
untrammeled, or the bars of a cage!"

Cain, triumphant, is done with his clamor,
And Abel speaks: "Cain's harvest. This is
your father, Cain's victory,
The conquest of his blade, where *Thou shalt
not kill!* lies bloodied,
And the stone and the arrow, again
Slaughter your peoples!"

Cain breaks in howling, damned: "Words,
words, toys!
The coward plays with them to appease, to
sleep his conscience.
He's not the man who doesn't bless his sword
in blood.
The coward had better suck the venom at his
mother's breast, not her milk!"
Abel says nothing, but I see his blood begins
to spill again.

* * * * *

A cold sweat stands in beads on my forehead.
My temples beat hot hammer-strokes,
measuring my fever.
The image in the mirror is long dissolved in
darkness.
The tears are hot on my cheeks. My knees
buckle.
I fall. And with me, my father is fallen at
my side.

ELIEZER GREENBERG, who appears in COMMENTARY for the first time, has published six volumes of Yiddish poetry and criticism, and in 1954 won the poetry award of the Jewish Book Council of America. Mr. Greenberg, who is on the staff of the American Jewish Committee, was co-editor, with Irving Howe, of *A Treasury of Jewish Stories* (1954). The present poem was translated from the Yiddish by Henry Gilfond.

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AMERICA'S SYRIAN COMMUNITY

Pattern of a Minority

MORROE BERGER

THE accidents of history have in our time produced another of those fateful confrontations of Jews and Arabs in the Middle East which have occurred at several junctures during the last millennium and a half. But today, for the first time, they confront one another outside the Middle East as well: thus in the United States there are more than five million Jews and about 450,000 people of Arabic-speaking origin or descent—whom, following their own practice, we shall call "Syrians," even though most of them are native Americans and many others came from countries outside the area that is now Syria.

Despite vast differences in numbers as well as other respects, the Jewish and Arab communities in America are similar in several ways. Both are largely middle class, have a common family pattern, are concentrated in big cities, and, since the rise of independent Arab states and the emergence of Israel, have an inescapable (if unclear and disputed) relation to their co-religionists and co-nationals in other lands. As the Arab or "Syrian" community in this country grows and prospers, it may become even more like the Jewish community in social and economic character (except for those Syrian Christians who, isolated from others, will merge into the general population), and this similarity will undoubtedly lead to more frequent contacts between the two groups in business, education, and community relations.

The first Syrian immigrants came to America in the middle of the 19th century, as a result of the religious persecution of Christians in certain parts of the Ottoman Empire, mainly Syria and what is now Lebanon. Oppression apart, the prevailing poverty and unrest were enough to drive people to migration, particularly the Christians, who found it easier to adapt to Western ways. At first only a few hundred came each year, but during the last decade of the 19th century several thousand entered annually. From the turn of the century to 1912 the influx rose sharply, reaching a peak of 9,000 for 1913 and 1914. World War I saw a decline to a few hundred each year. In the brief postwar resurgence, 3,000 Syrians entered annually, until the quota legislation in 1924 restricted the inflow. According to Dr. Afif Tannous, an American sociologist born in Lebanon, "By 1925 practically every household in every village of the Lebanese mountains had one or more of its members as permanent emigrants in the American countries" (*American Sociological Review*, June 1943).

From 1925 onward only a few hundred were admitted each year to the United States. By 1940, the Syrian-Lebanese community most likely numbered about 350,000, most of them already born in this country. Like other groups of recent foreign origin, they were concentrated in the urban areas of the Northeast, where nearly three-quarters of them lived. Well over half lived in five states: New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Ohio. About a fifth lived in three cities: New York, Boston,

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and Detroit. Detroit, incidentally, has a large number of Christian Arabs from Iraq as well as from Syria and Lebanon. Most of these Iraqis come from a Christian village just north of Baghdad called Tel Kayf, of whose inhabitants two visiting Englishmen recently wrote: "They all aspire to speaking American, however badly; their promised land is Detroit, a section of which is now called New Tel Kayf. Not a boy scrubbing . . . a floor, not a barman . . . mixing drinks, but has a dozen American relations, each of them, according to report, owning a Cadillac or at least a Buick" (*The New Babylon,* by Desmond Stewart and John Haylock, Collins, London, 1956).

We have no census data after 1940, but Syrian church and community leaders estimate that, except for some spread to the suburbs and to the West Coast, the proportions are substantially the same today as they were in that census year, although the number has increased to about 450,000.

WHO were these Arabic-speaking immigrants from the Levant? The meager sources reveal that the first big wave during the decades around the turn of the century were Christians from what are now Syria and Lebanon. A very small proportion had been professionals in the old country, and about a fifth were skilled workers, while the bulk came from farms and villages—small owners, laborers, and tenants, or small tradesmen. Many became peddlers and storekeepers in the industrial centers of the East and Midwest. According to the Institute of Arab American Affairs, they did not take to factory or construction work—the refuge of the unskilled immigrant from other lands—because of the general Middle Eastern disdain for manual labor. "Some kindly souls," the Institute's pamphlet, *Arabic-Speaking Americans,* reports, "probably Jewish wholesale merchants, showed them how to keep the wolf from the door by peddling trinkets and household necessities."

Peddling, which required no special training or permanent settlement in town or on a farm, was attractive to the Syrian immigrants, most of whom did not intend to remain in America permanently. Though many had worked on the land in the old country, they did not go into farming, because agriculture here meant isolation, while they were used to a closely knit village life. Farming in Syria and Lebanon was an enterprise involving the entire family, including grandparents and grandchildren, whereas the immigrants were either unmarried or recently married, or at most had only a small family of young children. Finally, as Dr. Tannous points out, the system of agriculture, at least in the deep South where Syrians lived closer to the farm country, was "completely alien" to them. At home, farming had been "intensive, diversified, and undertaken as a joint family enterprise," whereas in the South it was a "plantation system based upon cash crops, tenancy and share-cropping."

In this early period before World War I, the Syrians were known to dislike working for somebody else. They also shunned factory work, although they enjoyed a reputation as diligent and efficient workers, quick to adjust to American ways—"almost equal to the Jews," one observer reports employers as saying. Many Syrian peddlers and retailers soon turned to wholesaling in New York, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Chicago, and later in the South and Far West, and then to manufacturing in New York's clothing center. They now operate and own large enterprises in the trucking, clothing, amusement, and food industries, both in manufacturing and distribution. By World War II the second generation was coming of age, and many of the younger men entered the professions and the newer communications and entertainment industry.

A typical Syrian "success" story is that of the late patriarch of the Coury family, who died in 1956 at the age of eighty-four. He came to the United States in 1891, nineteen years old and practically penniless. With a little borrowed money he bought a meager stock of goods which he peddled across the country. He soon acquired a store, then branched out until he made several

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fortunes in various businesses. Retiring to Miami, he found it difficult to do nothing but relax; so he made another fortune through a chain of self-service laundries. His son, typically, has moved up the ladder of prestige but (less typically) without sacrificing opportunities to acquire more wealth; he is a prominent investment broker in Miami.

ALTHOUGH not so prosperous as this family, most Syrians are by now comfortably off. How can one explain their prosperity, in view of their relatively recent arrival and poverty? First, many of them were familiar with urban life, with buying and selling. Many had in fact been small merchants in the old country—during the years 1899 to 1907, of 18,000 adult male immigrants with identifiable occupations, nearly 15 per cent were merchants. Those who did not come from cities hailed from villages which, though based on agriculture, were settlements dense enough to have an active social life. Many of them, as Christians living in a predominantly Moslem world, performed business functions avoided by the Moslems. Finally, all were accustomed to a frugal existence in the old country, to which most of them planned to return; they were able and willing to subsist on relatively little and to save much of what they earned.

Even while they were still in the lower income brackets and in working class occupations the "Syrians" displayed the social characteristics of the middle classes in American urban centers. Studies of these Arab immigrants in Chicago, Pittsburgh, and the South reveal a common pattern: low crime rate, better than average health, higher IQ's and more regular school attendance among the children, few intermarriages and divorces. Family ties have been strong enough to preclude active interest in the wider community. It is not merely the difference in the size of the Jewish and Arab communities that explains the Jewish interest in ideological and political issues, as against the Syrians' lack of interest. It is as though the Syrians' capacity for relating themselves to others (at least among the foreign-born) were exhausted by the family and the group from the same village in the old country.

All studies of Syrian life in the U.S. emphasize the community's cohesion, its powerful loyalties to place and family, the high degree of control the group exercises over the individual (which explains the low crime rate), and the extraordinary concern of each member for all the others. One concomitant of this kind of loyalty is that few Syrians have to seek relief from the public authorities: the community takes care of its own. The reverse side of this trait is an unwillingness on the part of the average Syrian to extend his loyalties beyond the limits of the local community to Syrians of other Christian denominations, or to those coming from other localities in the old country. As Professor Philip K. Hitti wrote in 1924, "The Syrian is the man without a country *par excellence*. His patriotism takes the form of love for family and sect. . . . Syrian patriotism has no political aspects." Although this judgment must be modified today, it marks a low starting point for the growth of a wider conception of community in the ensuing three decades.

To appreciate these loyalties one has to know the various groups that make up what we loosely call the Syrian community in the United States. In the first place, as already indicated, the 450,000 "Syrians" are not all from what is now Syria. About half originate from what is now Lebanon, and slightly less than half from Syria. The rest, perhaps 20,000, are chiefly from Iraq, Arab Palestine, or Yemen. More important than national origin, however, is religious affiliation. About 125,000 are Lebanese Maronites, a community affiliated with Roman Catholicism. Another 100,000 or so belong to the Syrian branch of the Eastern Orthodox Church (loosely called Greek Orthodox); two-thirds of this group are from the major cities of Syria. The remaining sizable Christian group are the approximately 50,000 Melkites who, having recognized Papal leadership only in the 19th century, still retain many features of the Eastern

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Orthodox Church. There are an estimated 25,000 Moslems, mainly from Syria, Palestine, and Yemen, and about 10,000 Protestants from Lebanon, Syria, and Arab Palestine. The remaining 140,000 "Syrians" are either unaffiliated followers of these groups, or belong to other Christian sects.

THE Syrians have experienced two stages of political awakening in this country. The first, which began just before World War I, was oriented toward events in Lebanon and Syria only. The second, beginning in the middle 1930's with the sharpening of the Arab-Jewish struggle over Palestine and the subsequent growth of independent Arab states, was directed toward the Arab world as a whole.

In the earlier period, the Syrians (or Lebanese) in the United States did not think of themselves as Arabs. Although Arab nationalism was already strong in the Middle East, it had not yet penetrated the predominantly Christian groups in this country who still remembered their inferior status under the Moslem Turks and their uneasy relations with the Moslems in general. At that time, "Arab" to them meant "Moslem," and as Christians they looked to France or England to support the Lebanese and Syrian aspirations for liberation from the Turks. But as the Arab nationalists in the Middle East achieved greater unity, the Syrian community in America, by now composed mainly of the second and third generation for whom the "old squabbles" were no longer so important, began to advocate Arab independence of the West, the removal of the last vestiges of Western domination in the now independent states of Lebanon and Syria, and the support of the Palestine Arabs in their struggle against Zionism. Such attitudes, the Syrians felt, were in accord with traditional American anti-colonial policy (at least outside of Latin America); and indeed the United States supported England against France in favoring independence for Lebanon and Syria during World War II.

Despite their broad (though somewhat vague) support for Arab causes in the Middle East, the Syrians in America differ among themselves with respect to the intensity of their feelings and the degree to which they translate these emotional involvements into organized action. Like the Jews with regard to Israel, the community includes a small hard core who are concerned with little else but the cause of Arab nationalism; a somewhat larger circle that feels strongly but is not very active; and a vast majority who feel some sympathy for the Arab cause but have no intention of doing anything about it. There is little doubt that American Jews, as a more highly educated and articulate community, are much more concerned with Israeli affairs than are the Syrians with Arab questions.

Religious affiliation usually determines the Syrians' attitude toward Israel and toward the West. The Maronites from Lebanon, who have for centuries looked to France as their protector and many of whom were educated in French schools, have been least affected by the growth of Arab nationalism in the Middle East and the anti-Western outlook of some Arab spokesmen. In 1956 two American Maronite newspapers (one printed in Arabic, the other in English) attacked the Eastern States Federation of Syrian-Lebanese American Clubs for devoting too much attention to Pan-Arab matters instead of confining itself to Lebanese affairs; the leaders of the Federation were accused of slighting the distinction between Lebanon (whose population is roughly half Christian and half Moslem) and the other Arabic-speaking states (whose Christian element is much smaller).

Syrians of the Orthodox faith, who are from Syria proper as well as from Lebanon and Palestine, feel less like a nationality than do the Maronites, who incline to emphasize their pre-Arab, Phoenician origins, and are less prone to trace their origins to the period prior to the rise of the Arab. Moreover, they do not feel so estranged as do the Maronites from the Moslems, with whom they had less antagonistic relations dating back to the time of the Ottoman Empire. The Orthodox Syrian attitude is more

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accurately reflected in the official position adopted in 1956 by the National Association of Syrian-Lebanese American Clubs. Combining a statement of loyalty to the United States with support for the position of the Arab League on the Palestine question, the Association points out that it is an American organization "devoted to the . . . best interests of all the American people." Because its members are of Arab descent, "it can and has served as an effective link between America and the Arab world. . . . However . . . it has not and does not interfere in the internal affairs of these Middle Eastern nations." The Association refers to the responsibility of American citizens to make their views known on foreign policy. "Because its membership has close cultural ties and intimate knowledge of the Arab world, the National Association has a special responsibility to make recommendations regarding foreign policy in the Middle East." Guiding itself "solely by the dictates of the genuine interest of all the American people," the Association urges the United States to insist upon the implementation of all the United Nations resolutions on the Palestine question, as a means of bringing "peace and justice" to the area.

IN PRIVATE, Syrian Christians feel less intensely on these matters than such public statements indicate. Stronger identification with Arab causes is expressed by the few thousand Moslems in America. They are of course close to the leading Arab countries in religion and culture and have been in the United States only a few years. Many of them are from Arab Palestine (some are Arab refugees) and share the hostility of the Arab states toward Israel and the West.

An Iraqi Moslem who studied the Christian and Moslem communities in Chicago observes: "There are no amicable relations between the Christian Syrians and the Moslem Palestinians in the Chicago area. The Moslem Palestinians criticize the Christian Syrians because they neglect their Arabic traditions and do not have nationalist aspirations. During the Palestinian war (of 1948) the Christian Syrians were not sympathetic and did not raise money for the Arab cause" (Abdul Jalil al Tahir, *The Arab Community in the Chicago Area,* Ph.D. thesis, University of Chicago, 1952).

The extreme nationalism, anti-Westernism, anti-Americanism, and, more recently, pro-Soviet neutralism in Arab lands have disturbed the Syrians here. But while they are rather critical in private conversation, very little of their uneasiness finds its way into their publications or into the official statements of their organizations.

Syrian spokesmen take great pains to avoid the charge (which they make against American Zionists) of "dual loyalty." They have no counterpart either to the Zionist Organization of America or to the American Council for Judaism. Their relation to the Arab states thus lies within a narrower and less emotion-laden range than that of American Jews to Israel. This is not to say that the Syrians avoid contacts with representatives of the Arab governments here. They usually hold a banquet for newly arrived delegates from the Arab states or to honor them when they leave. They also welcome talks by speakers sent out by the Arab Information Center in New York, which is supported by the Arab governments. Recently, too, the national association of Syrian clubs endorsed the Center's program of disseminating information to Americans about the Arab world, and called upon the local organizations to avail themselves of the Center's services. Syrian Americans, however, are circumspect in dealing with the Arab Information Center. When they ask for speakers, many clubs think it advisable to emphasize their American character, and the fact that they are requesting some service or other "as Americans."

Professional anti-Semites here may try to recruit Syrians for anti-Jewish propaganda, but there is little evidence that they are very successful at it. Though many Syrians are active in disputing Zionist and Israeli claims and in supporting the Arab position, their attitude toward American Jews is not hostile. Among the older people

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relations between the two groups are chiefly commercial, and they have a healthy respect for one another's ability. The younger generation of Syrians and Jews seem to relate to one another in much the same way that each relates to other groups, that is to say on the basis of individual experience. With fewer Old World memories, less attachment to Middle Eastern causes, and no business rivalry, they tend to be less suspicious of one another. Although there are examples of close friendships among the older foreign-born Syrians and Jews (many of the latter being from Syria too), such intimacy is much more frequent among the younger people born in this country.

The Syrians' feeling of remoteness from political life of any kind poses serious difficulties for organizations seeking to raise money among them, even for such causes as Arab refugee relief. The older people are generous in support of their relatives in the villages of Lebanon and Syria, and in aiding churches here in America. They also contribute for the building of schools and hospitals in their "own" villages "back home." Outside agencies have a difficult assignment, however, in seeking to raise money for general purposes in the Arab world. For one thing, they run into the old Christian suspicion of the Moslems. For another, some Syrian businessmen are said to be apprehensive lest their contributions to Arab causes antagonize Jewish businessmen on whose trade they depend. Finally, many of them say (partly in earnest, partly as an excuse), "After all, we're Americans. What have we got to do with those people over there? Let's forget old ties and realize we're here to stay."

The Syrians' reluctance to get involved in international Arab affairs is only one aspect of their general lack of interest in politics. But to the extent that they do commit themselves, the foreign-born are concerned mainly with the politics of the old country, and the native-born with affairs over here. In either case, Syrians appear to be conservative with respect to domestic American politics.

There have been some minor changes, of course. Some Syrians born in this country have become interested in politics. Several have reached important appointive offices in the Federal government; more have been able to do so in executive and judicial agencies. Where they constitute a sizable minority vote, Congressmen have addressed their meetings, usually stressing the Syrian-Lebanese heritage and the community's contribution to American life. But thus far few Syrians have reached prominent positions in the major parties. It is only occasionally that one of them has been nominated even for a state elective office; in 1956, for example, the first Syrian in Massachusetts history was put forward (by the Republicans) for state senator. In general, there is an impression that, although both parties have occasionally nominated Syrians, the Democrats have done more in this respect. Yet, unlike most immigrant groups which settled in the large Eastern cities, the Syrians have not become faithful Democratic party members or voters. In the South, where they have adopted the outlook of the dominant majority, they have more often voted Democratic. But because of their concentration in small business and retail trade, and because of the identification of the Democrats with support for Israel, the Syrians, even in the South, have been more readily attracted to the Republicans, at least in national elections. In the Northern cities their political loyalties were more mixed, even before the rise of Israel as a domestic political issue. In New York, for example, they were lost in a crowd of minor immigrant groups which Tammany Hall—concerned mostly with the Irish, Jewish, and Italian groups—had largely ignored. During the 1932 election campaign a Democratic club of Syrians, Greeks, and Armenians even went Republican because Tammany refused them "recognition."

Since the recognition of Israel by President Truman in May 1948, the Republicans have gained voters among the Syrians. President Eisenhower has been applauded by the Syrian community as being more

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"impartial" on the Israel-Arab question than his Democratic predecessors. As a Syrian weekly put it when the President insisted on the withdrawal of Israeli, British, and French forces from Egypt last year, "It is certainly gratifying to us that Mr. Eisenhower, and not Mr. Stevenson, is in the White House at this time, and we hope this setup will not change." Yet the Democrats were not always so unpopular with the Syrians. The study of the Chicago area, referred to earlier, reported as late as 1952 that the Syrian Christians tended to be Democrats "because of American recognition of Lebanese and Syrian independence during the Truman administration." (Actually this took place during the Roosevelt administration, in 1944.) It appears, however, that this action was forgotten in the resentment over President Truman's quick recognition of Israel.

Many of the younger Syrians seem to support Democrats for local offices and Republicans for the Presidency and Congress. In Detroit, where the unions are so strong, a larger proportion of Syrians vote Democratic than in other cities. They have been successful, moreover, in getting local elective and appointive posts as Democrats with the support of the trade unions and, incidentally, of Jewish leaders in local politics. Syrian-Jewish cooperation in Detroit politics seems to have little ideological basis; it is chiefly the hope for political spoils that brings them together. Indeed, some Syrian political leaders are even friendly to Israel and publicly contribute to the UJA!

THE low level of interest in political affairs is paralleled by a lack of interest in political ideology. The European Enlightenment of course left the Middle East virtually untouched until quite recently, which in part accounts for the failure of the Syrians to develop an intellectual tradition to sustain them here. Few Syrians (even allowing for the small number of the community) have become prominent in radical politics or thought, nor does the community itself support serious journalism or any other effort to evaluate the role of immigrants in American life. Discussion of problems such as cultural pluralism, assimilation, and so on, which traditionally agitated the intelligentsia of other immigrant groups, are dismissed with phrases such as "We're all Americans and our main business is here." The more recently arrived "Syrians," many of whom are in fact Moslems from Palestine and Yemen, show a similar indifference, except toward Middle East politics, on which subject they have strong feelings. A large number of them have settled in the Detroit area where they are employed by the Ford Motor Company. They have a reputation as hard workers who are not much interested in union affairs but take great pains to please their superiors. Two members of the old Syrian community, Emil Mazey and George Addes, have attained important positions in the United Automobile Workers union, but not because of their connection with the Syrian community. In fact they are considered "radicals."

Political conservatism among the Syrians probably derives from their traditional distrust of government, which they have found oppressive both before and after Turkish control of the Arab world. This outlook has been reinforced by their entrance into retail and wholesale trade here. Few of them became workers, and fewer still (especially in the earlier years) entered the large-scale industries where the CIO, depending on became workers, and fewer still (especially tion, made every effort to have its members vote Democratic. As businessmen, a large proportion of the Syrians adopted the prevailing political attitudes of their class. Moreover, they were probably repelled by some of the non-political features of the Democratic party machines—the rowdyism, the drinking, the free-and-easy behavior, all of which was strange and even dangerous to a group accustomed to a patriarchal family system, to restrictions upon wives and daughters, and to an intensive effort to earn a livelihood. Finally, the Democratic machines on their part seem to have ignored the Syrians.

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A special factor operated among Christian Arabs of the Eastern Orthodox faith. Belonging to a church divided along national-linguistic lines, they found little to attract them in Orthodox churches based on other language groups. Instead, where they had no church of their own (or where there was no Orthodox church of another national-linguistic group) they were drawn into Episcopal churches and came under the influence of politically conservative Americans of the middle and upper social classes. The reason for their attraction to the Protestant Episcopal Church, which is in communion with the Church of England, is to be found in the tortuous history of 19th-century international politics and religious controversies.

At that time, the Ottoman Empire was being dismembered by the European powers, among whom England and Russia were rivals for first place. Orthodox churches, closely attuned to political trends, were splitting off from the patriarchate at Constantinople and establishing themselves as separate national churches in the countries liberated from Ottoman rule. In this situation British foreign policy set itself the delicate task of encouraging Christian European nationalism within the Ottoman Empire, without letting the Orthodox churches fall under the influence of the Russian Orthodox patriarchate. The British, therefore, encouraged the separatist tendencies of the Orthodox churches, seeking to make them independent of both the Ottomans and the Russians. Foreign policy was aided here, consciously or unconsciously, by the established Church of England, which sought a special relationship with the Orthodox churches of the East, on the grounds that both were anti-papist. The Church of England sent missions to, and sponsored conferences with, the Orthodox churches; in recent decades relations have been further strengthened with the Orthodox Christians in the Arabic-speaking countries of the Middle East, where the Church of England has had missionary and educational programs of long standing.

Competing with the Russians, to some degree, in "protecting" the non-Catholic Christians in the Arab world, the British government and the established Church of England thus enjoyed a special position among the Orthodox Arabic-speaking peoples. When the Eastern Orthodox Syrians began to emigrate to the United States, they naturally turned to the American counterpart of their "protectors" at home, that is, the Protestant Episcopal Church, and thus fell under the influence of a socially conservative group.

The influences we have been discussing operate more strongly upon the older than upon the younger generation. The younger people are not unaffected, but their conscious response to their Syrian heritage is conditioned by their interpretation of its effect upon their position as Americans. The result is the familiar gulf between the generations. American-born Syrians grow up in a culture strikingly different from the one their parents knew. Their relationship to government and religion (their own and that of others), their attitudes toward work and play, are different. The "old country" to them is a place of poor, uneducated people with "old-fashioned" ideas about relations between men and women, or between parents and children—people who are only now beginning to "catch up" with the "modern" era. Nevertheless, over the past fifteen years or so, the younger people have experienced a revival of interest in their national culture and religion. The tides of Arab nationalism in the Middle East have weakened the old localism here too. Syrians, especially younger ones, are now more willing to refer to themselves and their tradition as Arab. The rise of independent Arab states, with prominent and polished spokesmen in the United Nations, has made the younger generation less reluctant to recognize their Arab heritage. The new image of the Arab—"Westernized," skilled in diplomacy, influential in world affairs—is more suited to their own self-image as fully assimilated members of a powerful American nation. Arab neutralism has, however, recently introduced a disturbing element;

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for however strongly they support the independence of the Arab countries as against Western political influence, they think of these countries as Western and would like to see the Middle East move toward democracy at home and a pro-Western policy abroad.

The renewal of interest in the Arab heritage among the younger generations is thus not a rejection of "Americanization," but a reflection of the degree of assimilation that has already occurred, and the acceptance of innocuous cultural differences as the new "American pattern." Younger Syrians are now more willing to eat "Syrian" food and to introduce their friends to it, to attend the parties the older folks give and join in Arabic songs and dances, to listen to stories of the old country. Name-changing seems to have levelled off, perhaps because it was so frequent in the first American-born generation (*Sham'un* became Shannon, *'Ashashi* became Cook, *Mārun* Moran, *al-Khuri* Corey, *'Abbud* Abbott). First names are now almost exclusively American.

"AMERICANIZATION" has transformed the Syrian Orthodox Church too. Under vigorous leadership, the Arabic language has been gradually eliminated from the service, choirs have displaced the single voice, the organ has been introduced, and the ancient Near Eastern or Byzantine melodies have been harmonized and Westernized. The local churches, moreover, have taken on the qualities of "community centers," with recreational activities becoming more prominent. Americanization of the clergy has likewise been a deliberate policy; no one is ordained who has not been educated in America. The older generation has unsuccessfully resisted most of these innovations. Dr. Afif Tannous quotes (with his own emphasis on certain revealing words) the Orthodox priest in a small Syrian community in the Deep South: "Some members of the community were strongly opposed to some of the changes we introduced, but there is always a way to . . . keep the church prospering. We have to keep up with the times as they change; we must keep our church *streamlined,* if we are to *compete* successfully with other churches. Otherwise the new generation will lose interest." In Detroit, this conflict between the generations reached such intensity that a church was split in two.

American mass culture has also penetrated areas of Syrian life other than the religious. Parties and "social functions" are now bilingual. The community has developed a group of professional entertainers who play American dance music, as well as the old Syrian tunes, and tell jokes that require a smattering of Arabic to be appreciated. The Syrians have a small number of summer resorts in the Catskills, and their wedding celebrations are the occasion for a conspicuous display of clothing and food. A form of poetry has developed which combines Arabic and English; the following couplet not only illustrates the form, but incidentally reveals the Syrians' skeptical attitude toward the British-backed Arab revolt during World War I that brought fame to T. E. Lawrence and two crowns (first of Syria, then of Iraq) to his protégé, King Faisal:

B'sayfika am b'sayf al Inkilizi
Dakhalta ila Dimashk a' Sham-easy?
(By your own sword or by the sword of the
In-ki-li-zi [Englishman]
Did you enter Damascus so "easy"?)

A few entertainers have been able to break out of the Syrian "borscht circuit." The most famous of them is comedian Danny Thomas who responds as generously to Syrian groups as do Jewish entertainers to Jewish community organizations and the UJA. (His relations with his Jewish colleagues are excellent.) He has injected bits of Syrian references into his material, much as the more numerous Jewish comedians have done with Jewish lore. Last spring, for example, when he presented some of the "Emmy" awards sponsored by the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, he remarked that he himself had not been

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nominated this year. "I was too busy guarding the Canal," he explained. He hastened to add that he was not Egyptian but Lebanese, and then told an inoffensive Yiddish dialect joke about the Canal.

MUCH of the space in the American Syrian press is devoted to the reporting of achievements in various fields, to personal news, and to organizational affairs. This is more characteristic of the English-language than of the Arabic-language publications, which carry more literary articles and more news of international politics. Probably because they are a relatively small community, the Syrians have not been able to sustain any serious journalism or literary magazines in either language. The trend, indeed, is toward increasing triviality and mediocrity. A recent addition to the English-language magazines is cutely "wholesome" and vigorously "American"—a "family" publication with fiction, stories of the Arab past, sports articles, children's stories, recipes for Syrian dishes, all spiced with Arabic phrases. The folksy tone is reminiscent of the "daily bulletin" at a summer resort: "Frankly, we're pleased as punch to bring this first issue . . . to you." To those who helped put out the magazine the editor gave "a resounding slap on the back" and "a special 'thank ya, podners.'"

Such journalism is painful to many Syrians of an older generation aware of Arab literary traditions, as well as to younger intellectuals who lack the knowledge of Arabic necessary to appreciate and carry on these traditions. Before the First World War the Syrian community here supported several serious literary journals in which writers and poets experimented with freer forms than traditional Arab culture permitted. Intellectual life was intense. "Assimilation" proceeded, however, and both the writers and their audience declined in number, for the Arabic language was not perpetuated among the native-born generations. To them the language was too "different" and held no cultural values they wanted to maintain; it was a mark of foreign—therefore of inferior—origin. In South America, by contrast, where Syrians confronted a culture they held inferior to their own, and an economy and political system no more "modern" than the one they had fled, Arabic-language literature flourishes. The younger generation there has not only continued but even developed the community's cultural life; many of them are better read in the Arabic language, and more interested in Arab affairs, than the less educated members of the older generations.

As an immigrant group the Syrians may thus be said to have gone through much the same processes as others in America. The effects of domestic and international politics in their home countries have been felt only very recently, but then Arab nationalism has been a political force only since about 1914, when it coincided with the intensification of Jewish nationalism. The Arab-Jewish confrontation in the Middle East is different from what it is in America. Here the Jews are the more numerous and influential, whereas in the Middle East Israel faces an Arab domain whose potential power is greater.

To what extent can Syrian-Jewish relations in America affect Arab-Israeli relations in the Middle East? Some Jews believe that an "American" approach to Middle East problems by American-born Syrians and Jews would facilitate a rapprochement in the Middle East. Such hopes seem naive. The current flows in the other direction—the conflict in the Middle East affects Syrians and Jews here far more than they can affect events over there, for a simple reason: in the area of conflict sovereign states and whole nations are in embattled contact, while in America Syrians and Jews are both small minorities whose major interests lie in this country rather than abroad. Whatever cultural significance Arab-Jewish confrontation may hold for the two groups in America, it is not likely to affect seriously the historic confrontation of Arabs and Israelis in the Middle East.

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THE UNCANNY

A Story

MAX BROD

DARKNESS fell in the hall of the beautiful country house. The suddenness with which twilight appeared in this part of the world bordering the tropics, and the speed with which it deepened into darkness, no longer had any power to surprise the three friends who had come from Europe. The many years, almost two decades now, that they had spent in this country had robbed its atmospheric manifestations of their initial terror: the rapidly developing and devouring dusk, the slim crescent moon lying almost horizontal in the sky, against a dark shadowy disc that was almost indiscernible—almost, not quite, "the new moon with the old moon in its arms."

"Goethe had already noticed this phenomenon much farther north, in Italy," remarked Edward, the owner of the house on the shore of Lake Tiberias. This evening his conversation had struck a note of unrelieved gloom, he had castigated the blunders of frivolous statesmen, had spoken of the endless international conferences, as inept as they were probably insincere, that betokened nothing but so many lost hopes and the danger of fresh horrors of war. "The road to rearmament is paved with disarmament conferences," he summed up. Edward had been discoursing in this sombre fashion throughout the whole of the late afternoon, giving more scope to his imagination, perhaps, than heeding the demands of strict objectivity. It came as a relief to his two companions, Raphael, the philosopher, and me, when he quoted from the work which had become for him a never failing source of consolation and inspiration, Goethe's *Italian Journey*.

An atmosphere of uncanniness had hovered over our discussion from beginning to end. Raphael, the philosopher, seemed anxious to intensify rather than dissipate this atmosphere, to subject it to critical scrutiny, as it were. We spoke of telepathy, of premonitions, of the strange fact that we sense a death which is occurring thousands of miles away; soon we would have got on to ghost stories. The ghostly white crown of Mt. Hermon, a snowy cap stuck on a cone, looking like a modest imitation of the great holy volcano of Japan, hovered in the distance with no visible means of support. Below was darkness, and all around the transparent jagged heavens, emitting sweet music perhaps for non-human ears to hear.

"Something happened to me once that probably comes within this category of strange and unaccountable experiences on the border of sense-perception"—thus Edward began. "Till now I've never discussed it with anyone. And now that I'm trying to 'recollect it in tranquillity' and put it into words for the first time, this thing that happened so long ago, I find it completely improbable. My fault! From time to time I used to find myself recollecting this incident; had I clothed these subsequent recollections in words I would in all probability have succeeded in accustoming myself to the original experience, as I have to the new

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MAX BROD, born in 1884 in Prague, is widely known as a writer of fiction, poetry, and essays, and as the editor of Franz Kafka's works. Forced to leave Czechoslovakia in 1939, he settled in Israel, where he became adviser to the Habima Theater. Several of his books, including biographies of Heine and Kafka and the novels *The Master* and *Unambo*, are available in English. This story, translated from the German by Joseph Witriol, marks Mr. Brod's first appearance in COMMENTARY.

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moon with the old moon in its arms, or to the disappearing cap of snow-covered Hermon outside. Perhaps nothing is strange, there are only things we are not accustomed to."

WE DISAGREED, but Edward asked us to leave the question open for the moment. He wanted first of all to relate the "strange incident" he had spoken of.

"We were rambling in the Alps, by the lakeside, along comfortable walking paths, with nothing less alluring than Zauner's delectable *patisserie* in Ischl as our final destination. We had set ourselves this epicurean, frivolous, frothy—in a word Austrian—goal as a protest against any form of heroics. We were a lively, merry group of youngsters, students. There were two girls in our party. They were Viennese, but dressed in the peasant costume that was the smart attire for summer holidays at that period. The conversation turned on the war, which was then the first in our time. All the young men had been in it, all could tell a tale about the horrors they had only recently survived. How senseless it had all been!

"'Only once,' said one of them, a strong, handsome lad with deeply tanned features, who limped heavily as a result of a war wound, 'only once did anything happen to me that made sense. That was before the war, it is true; a few months before, but you will agree, I have no doubt, that it had some kind of connection with the war. It was early summer, about the same time of the year as now, and then too we were in the Salzkammergut. On that occasion, however, I was not strolling by the lakeside along well-worn paths; we were scrambling around heaps of boulders and through dense scrub on the mountainsides. I came upon a disused barn, a ramshackle wooden affair. As I opened its lattice door I saw, in the windowless expanse, a large, black bed. It was an unexpected sight and I approached more closely. To my astonishment, two powerfully built bodies lay on the bed, a male and a female. In spite of the darkness, the picture was clear enough and the immobility of the two bodies suggested sleep, perhaps death. A great black blanket covered both bodies up to the neck and fell in folds down to the floor. The two pale faces looked upward, to the roof. I believed I was perfectly calm and collected (to be mistaken about one's degree of nervous tension is not at all unusual), but I must have felt some uneasiness, for I didn't go all the way up to the bier, but very quickly turned and went out again, into the open. The lattice door slammed shut behind me. After a while, getting hold of myself, I returned into the darkness. Not a trace of any bed, the barn was absolutely empty. I rubbed my eyes and my forehead, but it made no difference.'"

"A secondhand story," interjected the philosopher. "Pointless. And proves nothing at all."

"It wasn't intended to prove anything," Edward replied quietly. "The story has two incidental features, though, which do tend to lend it a remarkable significance. The young man with the limp who had experienced the incident—he was in perfect health when it happened—came out of the barn with such a changed, chalk-white countenance that it startled everyone, and one of the group of friends, in an attempt to dispel the uneasiness that was making itself felt, gave the young man the nickname of Changeant, by which name I made his acquaintance, very enjoyably, five years later. The other, more important feature, is that when the group of friends who had been climbing in the Alps reached the next town, they learned that the Austrian Archduke and Crown Prince, Franz Ferdinand, and his consort, Countess Chotek, had been assassinated that same day in Sarajevo, and their bodies had been taken to the government building to lie in state. The lying-in-state, moreover—this was ascertained later—had taken place at exactly the same time that the limping young man had seen the vision in the lonely barn on the rocky ridge. The assassination at Sarajevo was, as most people still remember, the beginning of all

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those revolutions, outbursts of hatred, persecutions, and atrocities in which we are still inextricably involved. Curiously enough, nobody has ever thought of translating the name of the assassin of Sarajevo from its two ancient languages into present-day European. This name could have been a portent, it might have recalled us to the path of sanity. Gawrilo Prinzip was the assassin's name, which means: The strength of God is the beginning."

THERE was a lengthy silence. Then the philosopher spoke. "The experience I shall relate is somewhat reminiscent of the story we have just heard from Edward about the extraordinary signal for the beginning of the First World War. It has this advantage, that it happened to me personally and that I take full responsibility for it and reproduce it, as far as is in my power, without any change whatsoever, either in fact or nuance. And it is even more mysterious than Edward's story, since it has to do not with something that occurred contemporaneously but with something which still lay in the future. There is, it is true, a certain resemblance in prosaic externals, so to speak, between the story of the barn and my own experience. We are accustomed to expect that anything hinting of the supernatural should take place against an appropriate décor, ruined castles or parsonages à la Mörike, at the least. In the case of the mystery I am about to relate, however, nothing could have been more prosaic than its external environment; a cosy, friendly, extremely pleasant environment, indeed. I leave it to each one of you to decide whether this doesn't make the whole thing all the more uncanny.

"The incident occurred in the same early summer before the Great War when Edward's friend saw his barn vision. We were lying down somewhere on the edge of a forest in Moravia, a gay company of wanderers not unlike the group in Edward's story. Why I should have chosen to worm my way forward on my stomach, I couldn't say. It's part of the compelling mystery, if I may say so, of the whole thing—as I only realized afterward, of course. At the time it happened, I seemed to be under a compulsion which I took for granted and to which I paid no attention. I crawled on my belly through tall grass and scrub that badly scratched me, on toward an unknown goal. Suddenly I saw opposite me, as in a mirror, on the other side of a forest clearing, a soldier making his way toward me in the same crawling fashion. I could see him clearly among the tree trunks that were illumined by the sun. He wore an olive-green-yellowish uniform with which I was not familiar. And now I saw that he was taking aim at me with his rifle. Peace had reigned, an unbroken peace, for decades. Nobody thought of war. A robber, perhaps? I tried to communicate with him by signs, by calling out. He continued to aim ever more accurately at me. I gave a loud shout. And the apparition vanished. Amid the deep green vegetation, luxuriant bilberry bushes and strawberry plants that wound among the tree trunks, no living thing stirred. When I was mobilized, in August of the same year, and sent to the Galician front, I saw Russian soldiers, prisoners of war, for the first time, and immediately recognized the olive-green uniform that I had first seen in the Moravian forest. I must point out that at the time I saw the imaginary soldier the idea of a field uniform was absolutely unknown. I didn't get to know even our own Austrian field-gray until later, not until we were called up, in fact. When we were lying down on the edge of the forest in Moravia I hadn't the faintest notion about camouflage, it was as an absolutely raw rookie that I had done my military training only a few weeks before. And I had no more inkling than anybody else of the equipment of the Russian army."

Edward went over to his bookshelves. "I'd like to apply a passage I recently came across in the *Conversations with German Émigrés* to that anecdote," he said. "Allow me to read it to you: 'When the raconteur paused for a moment, the company began to express their opinions and doubts about

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the story: was it true, could it be true? The old man said that only its truth could make it interesting, for it had little other merit.'"

There was general laughter, and the discussion, which throughout the afternoon and evening had tended to be oppressive, finally took on a perceptibly lighter, brighter, and gayer note. It was in good spirits that we took our leave of the worthy Edward on his terrace overlooking the Sea of Galilee.

On our way home I asked Raphael why he had been so anxious to give the conversation a "spooky" turn, harping on themes of "mystery and imagination." "It was an attempt at psychotherapy, as you have rightly surmised," my friend observed. "Unfortunately there have been certain indications that the troublous times we have all gone through—still with us—have affected Edward more deeply than he realizes, more deeply than we, his friends, realize. What indications? Well, I'll give you one that must do duty for many more. Not long ago he told me how overjoyed he was when he saw a young mother pick up her little infant son, tired from walking, and press him so tightly in her arms that his blond head seemed almost to fill an indentation in her own shoulder. 'At last a genuine expression of infinite love,' he added. I agreed wholeheartedly, but it struck me that he must be in desperate straits to feel the need to seek out such a demonstration of love, as if it were some kind of rare specimen. I couldn't help thinking what a terrible thing it was for him to feel obliged to convince himself that not everything here below is bad, that vestiges of the old, decent way of life still remain. A man who has to get together a herbarium, so to speak, of genuine manifestations of love is in great danger, I feel."

"And what has all that to do with our 'tales of mystery and imagination'?"

"Not much, but a little, perhaps. Such tales concentrate, as it were, the dark mystery of our world on to one point. Therein lies their therapeutic value. Instead of what is evil and weird hovering suspended over the whole universe, it is catalyzed. There remains still an irreducible minimum of the anti-rational. How could it be otherwise in this world of ours, whose core is a mystery? You can't kill the devil, but you can compress him. That you can do. You must compress him, so that parts of life, at any rate, remain free from him. Just as in a jug the clear water and the sandy sediment separate. Or, to take a reverse analogy, just as a radiant crescent emerges from the indeterminate, dusty black-gray disc of the darkened, shimmering moon to do battle with, and increasingly illuminate, it.

"As far as Edward is concerned, though, I suggest we keep a close eye on him from now on and for some little time in the future."

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

HOME FOR PESACH

. . . And Back Again

SYLVIA ROTHCHILD

HOME for Pesach! It has a good sound, like home for Christmas, or for Thanksgiving, or the Fourth of July. Where is home? Home is where grandparents live. The children's books still say that Gramp lives on the farm and the city children come to visit to see the chickens and the cows. In our family, it's the other way round. The children live in the country and come to visit Grandma in her city apartment.

"My grandma's house is bigger than the Town Hall, the Library, and the Post Office put together," boasts my daughter.

"It's like a castle," says her sister. "It's a red brick castle with a drug store downstairs for emergencies, a candy store around the corner, and a bakery that you can smell all day."

We pack for a three-day visit as if we were bound for a trip around the world. Who knows what the weather will be in April? We're prepared with snow suits and straw bonnets, boots and pink sandals.

I make a list. I must tell the cat-sitter where the food is. The water and electricity must be shut off. A capricious dishwasher once turned itself on while we were gone. Like an idiot sorcerer's apprentice, it nearly washed the house away before the pump gave out.

The phone rings as I shut the last door. It's a Mrs. Johnson to ask a favor. She has been invited to play the violin at a Women's Club tea. She would like me to accompany her on the piano. I agree, and explain that I cannot stop to talk. "I'm going home for . . . Easter," I say.

"Of course," she says. "I forgot, you lucky girl. I love New York. I adore the lights, the shopping, and the shows. Have a marvelous time and be sure to come see me as soon as you come back."

Finally I join the family in the car. We take leave of the half-opened narcissus nodding into the swollen brook and the crocuses strewn like orange peels across the lawn. Goodbye to our own little piece of exurbia!

The drive is supposed to decompress me and offer a transition from my hurried, disciplined life to the one I will lead in Brooklyn. At home, every morning, I count out the hours of the day like money in the bank; so much for the children; so much for the typewriter; so much for the garden and so much for the stove; so much for the piano and for friends and so little for miscellaneous interruptions. Two friendly telephone calls or a bloody little nose can wreck the accounting system.

Ahead of me yawn three days of visiting with relatives, hours in the kitchen, gossiping, while I sit with empty hands. I might enjoy it if I were more adjustable. But I grow tense at the thought that I will have to stop running. Once I visited a friend in her trailer and moved so fast I cracked my head in a low doorway and knocked myself out. I tell myself to remember it. Running in my mother's house will have the same effect.

SYLVIA ROTHCHILD's first published story, "The Mothers," appeared in COMMENTARY in October 1951; since then she has contributed many stories and sketches of Jewish life. Mrs. Rothchild lives in Sharon, Massachusetts.

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READY or not! Five hours and two hundred and fifty miles later I pull the lollypops out of the children's hair and wipe the graham cracker crumbs off their cheeks. We're home.

My father has been sitting at the window waiting for us. My daughter jumps into his lap before he can get up. She strokes his last white hairs, kisses his ears, and takes the pennies out of his pockets. My mother wipes her hands on her apron, and stares at us hungrily and smiling, as if we might disappear if she blinked.

While we carry in our valises, I notice that the couch sags a little deeper than last year. The linoleum is worn a darker brown and the cracks in the ceiling have not been repaired. But everything is in order and very clean. The furniture gleams and the cotton doilies and net curtains are stiff with starch. Every corner has been scrubbed in honor of the holiday and even scrubbing isn't enough to make the surfaces suitable for Passover.

The kitchen table is covered with three sheets of heavy cardboard. The cupboards where everyday dishes are kept are locked. The stove has a sheet of tin over it to hide the porcelain that has been touched by leaven and the sink has a Passover drain board. If anything falls into the sink, it will be thrown away.

Grandma explains what can be touched and what must be left alone. The children listen eagerly, entranced to discover that there's a taboo in every corner. They obey without questioning. In an enchanted castle, spoons, dishes, and cloths may have a life of their own that must be respected. Kitchen closets containing cereal, beans, and cans of salmon may be locked as if demons would escape if they were opened.

When the car is emptied and parked, my husband stretches out on the couch and goes to sleep. There's little else for him to do. Two children find tricycles and ride them up and down the long hallway. The television blares though no one looks at it. My son beats a drum, abandoned by his cousins, with his fists, while I try to hush him.

"Please," begs my mother. "It was quiet last week and it will be quiet next week. I hear them only once a year. Let them!"

I stand in the kitchen, looking for work to do. The beet soup bubbles in the pot. Three potato pies are in the oven and my mother pulls pinfeathers out of the fourth chicken. She refuses to tell me how I can help her but I know enough to find the chopper and the chopping bowl. I pound away at the onions, the chicken livers and hard boiled eggs, and glue them together with globs of golden chicken fat. The chopper thumps rhythmically while I watch my fingers. One year I left a piece of my thumb in the bowl. I remember how surprised I was to find it didn't hurt. I wondered whether all losses could be borne if they were not premeditated. Thinking brings the pain, the guilt, and the understanding.

My mother and I work in silence for a little while. We both fear that words will obscure the waves of affection that flow between us. She does not scold me for being too thin and I watch her devotion to superabundance and do not say, "What do you need it for?" The children take turns bolting into the kitchen. Each time they get cookies and kisses. They look at me with questioning eyes, asking for permission.

"I've had five already," admits the eldest.

"Don't ask," says my mother. "If Grandma gives, take."

I'm proud of my self-control. I don't warn her that she will make them sick or remind her that she tried to fatten us all to obesity. I refused to eat, but my sister knew years of struggle and discipline before she came back to normal size. My brother is still huge.

It pleases me to be indulgent and passive, a grown woman, no longer impatient with my mother and angry at my father. My brother and sister have ceased to be inadequate extensions of myself and have miraculously turned into real human beings with dreams and sorrows of their own. It seems a pity that it has taken me thirty-five years to come to these discoveries. No harm would have come out of learning sooner.

When silence palls, we look for safe subjects to discuss. I ask about aunts and cousins and hear that they are all, "Thank God, the same." The familiar phrase reminds me that in our family change has a connotation of trouble if not outright disaster.

"The old lady with the fiddle," Mamma says, "how is she? She has still trouble with her children?"

Mrs. Johnson, who wants me to call her Mary, is the old lady Mamma means. I sent

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home clippings from the local newspapers when we last played together. The last time I was home, Mamma stared at the pictures while I told her of Mary Johnson's accomplishments, noting again and again that she was almost as old as Mamma.

"What could be missing to such a woman," said my mother with such unabashed envy that I stopped telling her about the rose garden and the beautiful white house, about the trips to Florida in the winter and the Cape in the summer. Instead I shared Mrs. Johnson's troubles with her. Her thirty-year-old son had no interest in work of any kind. Her daughter had just divorced her second husband.

Mamma dispensed with all comfort and luxury with a wave of her hand. "I won't trade with her then," she said. "I wouldn't want to live if I didn't have pleasure from my children."

THAT night is the first Passover Seder. My younger sister and older brother come with their children. The dining table is opened as far as it can go and two bridge tables are added for the children. The white tablecloth is covered with a sheet of plastic so that the wine can be mopped up as fast as it's spilled.

My father makes the blessing over the wine. My youngest nephew begins to ask the four questions that begin the ceremony. He stumbles. His father glares at him and the boy bursts into tears. He runs away from the table with his mother after him.

Papa asks himself the questions and gives himself the answers. He tells the story of the Exodus in Hebrew which only he can understand. He chants in a monotone, stopping only to point to the chicken bone that is supposed to be the paschal lamb, to the celery that symbolizes bitter herbs, to the chopped apples and nuts that remind no one of mortar or clay. The younger children do not even look. Two older ones beg to sing the portions they have learned at Hebrew school, but my father doesn't know the tune they know and he can't stop to wait for them. They get even by giving each other sly pushes and kicks and wiggling the rickety table. A little one chokes on a crumb of matzah. Another throws up his taste of horseradish that he thought was cherry jam.

Papa doesn't look up from the Haggadah. He reads doggedly without changing a word or skipping a sentence. When he is done my mother brings the food she has been preparing all day, according to her own unchangeable ritual.

I help carry in the soup, made exactly as it has been made the twenty-five years I've been carrying it. The smell of it reminds me of all the battles and quarrels against the rigidity and stubbornness in my father's house—all lost battles. But they look so different now that I've established a secure beachhead for my own rigidity. I imagine that whatever dignity my parents have comes from their refusal to accommodate themselves to me.

The second day is the same as the first. Cousins and aunts come to visit in the afternoon. I hide in the kitchen with my mother. Each guest is offered a dish of pancakes and a glass of wine. I beat the eggs in batches of four and pour the fat into the frying pan. Nieces and nephews roll nuts in the hallway. My children are delighted with the timelessness, the freedom. They can run around the block whenever they feel like. They can play hide-and-seek under the high old-fashioned beds and they can eat all day long. They wallow in the noise and confusion.

My mother is in her element. Her face is flushed at the stove. Her hair is disordered and her apron is streaked with food. We're together, doing women's work, gossiping about relatives, and discussing the prices of apples and potatoes.

The second Seder is the same as the first. The chanting, the squirming, and the soup are unchanged. But this time my nephew doesn't stumble. The food, the wine, the Haggadah, and the children make conversation impossible. My brother, who sells fabrics to dress manufacturers, says that business is good. My brother-in-law complains that television sets are not moving. A sleepy child cries and gets everyone's attention. Boredom settles on us all, like a frost.

We ask the family to excuse us the last night before going home.

"Where are you going?" they ask.

We don't know. We're going out to find Mrs. Johnson's New York. We'll look for lights, for shows, for something to take home. First we call our old friends. They've all moved to Larchmont, Bellaire, or Darien. We take the subway uptown, alone.

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We think that we might eat a huge lobster as an antidote to all the potato pancakes we've eaten. Perhaps, we'll see a show. It doesn't matter what it costs. We'll find a Modigliani print in a bookstore. We can even go to a night club.

Instead we wander around Times Square, like lost teen-agers. There are no tickets for anything we would care about. We're too full to eat, and are really not interested in a night club. We want desperately to be frivolous but have no idea of how to begin. We don't speak of it, but feel that there is something improper about spending as much money for an evening's entertainment as the family could use for a week's food. No matter where we go, we will come back to sleep on the broken sofa and wake up to see the cracked ceiling above our heads.

When we're tired of walking, we permit ourselves an Italian movie, and a pastrami sandwich and a glass of beer. The best part of Italian movies is that when you come out of the theater to American reality, you feel so lucky.

In the morning I call my sister and sister-in-law to say goodbye. I know that we've said very little to each other, not only because children didn't let us, but because we don't know how to talk to each other. I ask, "What are you doing?" They answer, "Nothing much," and the fence is up. I imagine that they think I'm boasting or complaining when I volunteer information.

"May we be together again next year," says my mother.

"If God wills," says my father. "May next year find us alive and in good health!"

The children cry because they want to stay longer. But our visit is over.

All the way home I make lists of what I shall do. The children sing nursery school songs. I feel as if I were coming out of a tunnel. The way home to the country always seems shorter.

THE next morning I find that the rain has washed the crocuses away, but the narcissus has opened and the violets are showing their heads. I have a light-headed feeling when I take the children off to school.

Mrs. Johnson is at her mailbox when I drive past. I have to stop. She insists that I have some coffee with her. I can tell that she is troubled and needs someone to talk to. It doesn't seem right to have troubles in her beautiful white house. She grew up in it. But its paint is always fresh. There are no cracks in the ceiling. It's in perfect order and repair.

"There ought to be a way to protect parents from the greediness of their children," she says bitterly.

I'm embarrassed to listen. Sometimes she complains of problems, years old. I never know whether she is remembering her daughter's adolescent rebellion or her adult dependence; her son's indolence or stupidity. She speaks of the younger generation with anger, forgetting that I am of the younger generation.

The dogs, three boxers, jump around us, and I pretend I don't mind. I really dislike their firm, warm bodies against my legs and wish they would go away. Mary Johnson pats them affectionately and talks baby talk to them. "My best children, my best sweet children! No problems with these babies!"

Mr. Johnson has coffee with us. He looks on patiently while his wife shows me a new black and gold tray that she has painted and reminds her of some plants she said she would give me for my garden.

I don't say much at first. I always feel something strange about my friendship with my neighbors. Perhaps it's because they assume that we understand each other and they know nothing about me. All I know of them is that Mr. Johnson is a retired businessman. He fishes and plays golf in the summer and goes to Florida or Arizona for the worst of the winter. I see his name in pieces about the local Rotary. Mrs. Johnson is still a pretty woman, well cared for. She's the secretary of the County Historical Society, a vice-president of the Women's Club, and she paints trays and plays the violin very nicely.

Some rainy days we play sonatas together. She brings me the perennials that she thins out of her garden and samples of her jelly when the strawberries are ripe. Though she's not known to be a warm person and prefers dogs to children, she's always very friendly and warm with me. We have a kind of symbiotic relationship. I need someone older to look after. She needs a daughter who can play the piano and be independent of her parents.

I'm embarrassed when her children are at

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home. She scolds them as if they were infants or pokes fun at them as if they were her enemies. Conscious of her voice, I hear my own, and I find I have three separate sets of vocabulary and inflection.

I have an everyday voice for children, husband, and old friends. I have my Brooklyn voice, half dead-end, half Yiddish, that I affect as soon as I see my family, and then I have a special voice that I hear in Mrs. Johnson's living room. I hear myself as if in a record at the speech clinic. My—brown—cow. . . . What am I doing? I'm imitating Mrs. Johnson. I do so well I could pass for a Wellesley girl.

MRS. JOHNSON wants to hear all about New York. . . . What can I tell her? For the first time, she asks about my family.

"What does your father do?" she asks.

I redden slightly, angry at myself that I do, and tell her that he's a presser.

At first she doesn't seem to understand, but finally she says, "Like that nice little tailor in the square."

I get a feeling that she's pleased to be a liberal person who can be friends with a tailor's daughter who plays the piano. But it may be all in my imagination.

"How old is he?" she asks.

"Over seventy," I say.

"He must be terribly strong," she says enviously. I cannot help but look at Mr. Johnson, well-tailored even in the morning, and smelling of shaving lotion. His cheeks are pink from the winter and summer sun. I think of my hollow-chested, bent father, with dry, trembling hands and sunken face. His whole body screams exhaustion, but he refuses to rest, afraid that a day's uselessness will condemn him to death.

I think I have to explain it to Mrs. Johnson. I tell her that he's an Orthodox Jew, an immigrant from Poland, whose English after forty years in America is still unsure. She knows, of course, that we're Jewish, but she is so pleased that we look just like anybody.

I find myself describing a Seder. I tell no lies, but neither do I tell the truth. I let her get a vision of a genial patriarch and his respectful family acting out an ancient play. She thinks of a great feast, not hard-boiled eggs and boiled chicken. She enjoys the sound of the words and repeats them after me so that she will remember the paschal lamb, matzah, bitter herbs with ginger and apples and nuts.

"I love old customs," she says, "especially when they're happy." She thinks I should write down what I have told her for the Historical Society newspaper. "It's absolutely charming," she says and remembers that someone had once explained the Jewish New Year to her, but she had not liked it at all. "It was morbid," she said with revulsion, "but the Seder is delightful. Thank you for telling me about it."

When I get up to go she gives me some music, a Victor Herbert medley that we will play at the Women's Club tea. We both prefer Beethoven but the ladies begged for something lighter when we played the "Spring Sonata" last time and we promised to find something familiar.

I'm ready to go, when her daughter comes down. I smile. She nods.

"Don't you dare go downtown in those vulgar red pants," says her mother. She turns to me and in another voice, "It was lovely, dear. Come again soon!"

I have the door open when she adds, "That girl of mine has always been demanding. When she was little she wanted me to be in the house waiting for her whenever she came home. She still does."

I look back at the house and see her at the window, surrounded by the dogs. One is up at her shoulder snuggling his nose against her cheek. The other two have their paws on the window sill. Something about the composition reminds me of my mother with my children clinging to her, the purest devotion in their faces.

I race the motor. I don't know the time. I'm terrified that the littlest one may have come home before me to be frightened by an empty house.

I rush for nothing. When I get to the driveway, I see the nursery school station wagon, a little bit down the road behind me.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

THE LEVELS OF LOVE

A Commentary on the Song of Songs

ABRAHAM ISAAC KUK

THE book of the Song of Songs is read in the synagogue during the Passover and on Friday evenings. The absence of any overt religious references in it, together with its erotic imagery, has led many modern readers and scholars to regard the Song as a collection of secular love poems. At the end of the 1st century, during the debates around the canonization of the Bible, there were also rabbis who saw no reason for including these poems. It was Rabbi Akiba's influence that carried the verdict. Not only was it a Holy Book, he argued, but the holiest, for it was an expression of the love binding the Community of Israel to God. The Church has similarly claimed that the poem is an allegory of love. But the following commentary from Rav Kuk brings out what seems to me to be the uniquely Jewish approach to the Song. The Church tends to disallow the meaning of the poem on any but a religious level. Rabbi Akiba, according to Rav Kuk's interpretation, readily accepts the poem as an expression of secular love, but holds that this is only part of its meaning. For Akiba and for Judaism, implies Rav Kuk, love is one flame expressing itself on many different levels. To diminish the flame on any one level is to weaken the capacity of love on all levels. Rav Kuk calls upon the many-faceted life of Rabbi Akiba as proof of his argument—the Akiba whose experience ranged from a tradition-breaking romance with his employer's daughter, to torture and death by the Romans for his political and religious activities.

The greatness of Abraham Isaac Kuk, former Chief Rabbi of Palestine, was his own ability to function effectively on many levels, political, legalistic, mystical, etc.; as a consequence, his religious responses took on a deeper resonance, which seems to me especially evident in this excerpt taken from Rav Kuk's commentary to the Sabbath Prayer Book. The translation from the Hebrew is my own.—HERBERT WEINER

RABBI Akiba said, "All the world is not worth as much as the day on which the Song of Songs was given to Israel, for all the Scriptures are holy but the Song of Songs is the holy of holies."

* * *

He who is a donkey in the affairs of love will not be able to understand what the poets of love seek to express in their songs, and if he could degrade their longings to the level of his own gross feelings, he would do so happily.

So, too, he whose heart is uncircumcised because he has not yet known the high reaches of holy thoughts, nor tasted the sweetness of love for the Rock of All the Worlds, such an ignorant and unwise man cannot conceive that the throng of yearnings which fill the Song of Songs comes out of a treasure stored up in the soul of the entire people that was chosen by God for His sake and His witness, for he does not feel the absence of what he has not known.

* * *

But he who has not been forgotten by God in His wisdom will recognize, and will sense, that it would have been impossible for the treasure of the Holy Writings of the holy people whose saga is permeated with the soul's love for its Rock and Fortress, expressed, in the days of the people's greatness, in deeds of grace and glory, and in the days of its poverty and afflictions, in rivers of blood, all quickening love, strengthening it, making it visible and felt—

It would have been unthinkable that these yearnings of love toward God should remain unrecorded in the Book, the great compilation of all our holy meditations.

True, only he who at the moment when

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they were tearing his flesh with iron combs called out, "All my life I was troubled about the commandment to love God with my whole soul, asking, when shall I be able to fulfill it?" [by dying for the sanctification of His name]—

Only he could say, "All the world is not worth as much as the day on which the Song of Songs was given, for all the Writings are holy, but the Song of Songs is the holy of holies."

* * *

As a drop of water from the ocean, as a spark from the flame of fire reaching to the heart of heaven, as one letter of a thick and mighty book, so are man's expressions of earthly love esteemed also by this lofty soul. For him, Rabbi Akiba, a personal pure love, the love of his people, and the divine and holy love, were intertwined like "the tower of David, layer upon layer."

But how low are the pygmies, crawling about the lowest levels of the mist-wrapped tower, who measure its height, which reaches into the clouds, by the puny reach of their own hands, and who look up with their weak eyes; and if from the top of the tower a star is spied, glorious and beautiful, the pygmies scorn it, seeing nothing there.

They who cannot see more in Rabbi Akiba than the passionate shepherd-lover of the daughter of Calba Shvua—they could never understand the impulse to that wondrous decision, that the Song of Songs is the holy of holies among all the other Writings.

They who are pure of heart will see Rabbi Akiba in his full stature—

He who laughed when he saw a fox walking out of the Holy of Holies of the destroyed Temple, because to his gigantic soul the distant future was as visible as the present—

He who laughed when he heard the great noise of the Roman crowds, for by the divine love which welled up from the depths of his soul's wisdom, it was revealed to him, as in a living image, that Rome and its idols would completely vanish, but the light of Zion shine forever.

The joy of visualizing the certain future so filled his pure heart that it left no room for sighs about the awful present, which he saw only as a passing cloud on the surface of the bright heavenly sun.

Only from the well of such a soul, who was able to surrender his life as he uttered the "One," could the verdict come that "all the Writings are holy, but the Song of Songs is the holy of holies."

VANITY

FLORENCE VICTOR

My wife was only fifty when she died,
And all the family came to sit with me
In sneakers and black dresses; we all tried
To think how beautiful she used to be,
And held the children closely when they
cried.

It's twenty years since then; now, as I ride
The subway I see people dressed in black
Wool sweaters. I keep trying to decide
Why some of them wear sneakers in the
snow.
I can't help staring sometimes, yet inside
I feel things I'd forgotten coming back.
Who are they mourning for, I'd like to know?

Florence Victor's verse has appeared previously in the pages of Commentary (July 1957, January 1958). A native of Brooklyn, Miss Victor is still a student, in her senior year at Queens College.

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ON THE HORIZON

AMERICAN USAGE TODAY

Words and Sensibilities

STANLEY EDGAR HYMAN

AT TIMES of upward social mobility, the etiquette books appear, to teach the rising groups how to behave almost indistinguishably from the groups they join or supplant. In the modern world such books have appeared in spurts from Castiglione's *Courtier* in the Renaissance to Emily Post, and I suspect that when the Babylonians replaced the Sumerians they promptly produced cuneiform tablets teaching table manners. Language habits are particularly sensitive indicators of class and education, as we saw in the recent British controversy over "U" and "Non-U" speech (the "U" standing for "University," and thus by extension "Upper Class"). The relationship of language to status is less absolute in this country, but as the advertisements offering to increase your earning power by increasing your vocabulary make clear, there it is. A generation or two ago it was the problem of Jiggs's Maggie, who needed simple correct grammar to go with her new wealth, or greenhorn cousin Shmelka, who needed English idioms and more certainty about v's and w's when he talked to customers in the store. Now the problem is more complicated. Maggie's daughter Marlene lives in Larchmont and addresses the PTA, and Shmelka's grandson Stuart works in advertising and is a Young Republican. What *they* need is some handy guide to the difference between *factious* and *factitious, fictious* and *fictitious,* or reliable information on the nuances of meaning between *harangue* and *tirade.* Dictionaries are of no use because they note alternatives in most cases without recommendation, they are not concerned with transitory subtleties of fashion, and they are a nuisance because each word must be looked up separately. To fill the special needs of Marlene and Stuart, handbooks of usage come into being.

*A Dictionary of Contemporary American Usage,** by Bergen and Cornelia Evans, does not attempt to evade these delicate matters of status. "Respectable English," the preface says, "means the kind of English that is used by the most respected people, the sort of English that will make readers or listeners regard you as an educated person." Certain "perfectly intelligible" usages "are not used by educated people and hence are regarded as 'incorrect' and serve as the mark of a class." The Evans book is offered as a guide to "what is currently accepted as good English" in the United States; "It is designed for people who speak standard English but are uncertain about some details." Thus an entry will conclude characteristically, "This construction is condemned by some grammarians, but in the United States it is accepted and used by well-educated people"; or, of something disapproved, "Speech of this kind shows that one's friends aren't bookish people."

*Random House, 567 pp., $5.95.

STANLEY EDGAR HYMAN, who here examines two new dictionaries of American usage, is professor of literature and folk literature at Bennington College and a staff writer for the *New Yorker*. A revised version of his book on modern criticism, *The Armed Vision*, was published in paperback recently by Vintage along with a volume of readings edited by him, *The Critical Performance*.

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For Marlene and Stuart, many of the book's distinctions are useful and informative. *Loving* is chaste as an adjective *(a true and loving wife)*, concupiscent as a noun *(I need loving)*. *Costive* does not mean *costly* but *constipated*, *noisome* does not mean *noisy* but *obnoxious*. *Recrudescence* is the breaking-out-again only of something thoroughly unpleasant in England, of anything at all here. It may even be helpful to know that "The plural of the tailor's *goose* and of the improper gesture is *gooses*." Some of the examples look as though they were aimed at making the diner-out civil, if not necessarily a wit, so that remarks on the plural of *asparagus* conclude "The food is always treated as a singular, as in *this asparagus is good and how long did you cook it?*" The most useful thing the Evanses (the Evans? their book gives no clue) do is hammer away insistently at clichés: *bowels of the earth* "has been in constant service since 1593 and should be retired"; *brown as a berry* "has been repeated ceaselessly for more than five hundred years and is entitled to at least that long a rest"; *brown study* "should be avoided"; and so on endlessly. Phrases like *it stands to reason that* are dismissed as "no more than a clearing of the throat." Sometimes the authors offer constructive alternatives to clichés in the form of less bedraggled clichés. They remark of *as thick as thieves:*

> For those who want to avoid it but still feel the need for some such comparison, there are many established alternatives waiting: as thick as hail, as thick as hops, as thick as huckleberries, for those who wish to emphasize profusion; as thick as porridge, for those who have specific density in mind; and for chumminess, a fine old Scotch simile, as thick as three in a bed.

THE decision sooner or later forced on all such books is when you ride the hobby-horse of common usage and when you dismount. The authors will accept *like* for *as* in *Winston tastes good like a cigarette should* (as Mr. Evans suggested in his television program), but their appeal is not to its victory in oral currency, but to examples in Shakespeare, More, Sidney, Dryden, Smollett, Burns, Southey, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, Darwin, Newman, Brontë, Thackeray, Morris, Kipling, Shaw, Wells, Masefield, Maugham, and the eleventh *Britannica*. The authors tend to follow usage in most cases, but periodically they take a stand against it. They disapprove of the debasement of a word like *agony* in *I was in agony in those new shoes*, proposing instead *My feet hurt*; but they record the similar debasement of the word *passion*, from the Passion of Christ on the Cross to *She had a passion for fresh strawberries*, without comment. They regularly protest such meaningless business jargon as *enclosed please find, under separate cover*, and *enclosed herewith*, although usage is overwhelming. They have odd nostalgias for old forms, even remarking of the obsolete spellings *hickop* and *hicket* for *hiccup*, "It's a pity they've been lost."

On the short sharp words of prejudice, the Evanses make no pretense of following common usage, but deliberately set out to reform it. Of *Jew* they remark characteristically: "It is a word of incomparable dignity and immeasurable scorn and everything in between. It used to be a word of great comic range but that, at least, is fading. Its colloquial uses as an adjective or a verb are all offensive. The guidance to the 'correct' use of the noun does not lie in any dictionary but in the heart and mind of the user." There are no entries for words like *kike* and *sheeny*. Under *mulatto* the authors state their general principle: "All racial designations illustrate the difficulty underlying euphemism: contempt or disdain or dislike cannot be made acceptable to its victims by a mere change of words"; but under *Negro; nigger; nigra; darky* they insist "Negro is the proper and, in formal writing, now the only permissible name." The entry on *African* suggests special pleading, concluding: "In English as used in South Africa no white man is a *native* (even though native) and no black man is a *South African* (even though he and his ancestors have lived in South Africa for many generations)."

Some of the information in *A Dictionary of Contemporary American Usage* would seem relatively useless, in terms of the book's stated intentions or by any criteria. *KLM*, it turns out, stands for the Dutch airline *Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maat-schaapij voor Nederland en Kolonien N. V.* The plural of *caryopsis* is *caryopsises* or *caryopsides*, not *caryopses*; the plural of *coccyx* is *coccyxes* or *coccyges*, not *coccyces*; the plural of *dialysis* is *dialyses*. The correct Arabic singular is

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jinni and the plural *jinn*. Other information is certainly misinformation. The authors confuse the *aegis* of Zeus, forged by Hephaestus, with that of his daughter Athena, with the Gorgon's head in its center, and they pontificate "There is only one aegis and in its classical sense the word does not have a plural." They understand *feral,* in use at least since 1659 to mean a domesticated plant or animal that has run wild, as meaning simply *wild* or *animal* (although they quote Darwin's "The dovecote pigeon . . . has become feral in several places" as their example). Consequently they identify it as "solely a literary word" (although it is an accepted technical term, and in fact the only term, in several sciences), connect it only with one of Mr. Evans's pet peeves, the legends of children reared by animals, and laugh it away. The authors think *skittles* and *ninepins* "are two names for the same game," although skittles is an entirely different game played with a spinning disk or top. They claim that the ending of *Spaniard* is "the derogatory formation seen in *coward, sluggard, drunkard,* and so on," but make no attempt to explain *wizard, poniard, galliard,* and the rest.

THE comparison that *A Dictionary of Contemporary American Usage* provokes on every page is with Henry Watson Fowler's *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage,* published in 1926 and the standard reference work since. The Evans book may be read as a running argument with Fowler and his rigors, and at times they resemble nothing so much as modern, permissive parents battling the authoritarian, curmudgeonly old grandfather. On *asset:* "Fowler regards it with stern disapproval and adjures his readers to shun it. Yet it is a common word in our language now and a useful one. It is an asset to the language. That it is a false singular is of no importance." Fowler lists *donate* among back-formations too irregular to be used, but it is "now a fully accepted word." The Americanism *caption,* for a legend under a picture, "has given some purists a conniption. . . . 'Rare in British use,' grumps Fowler, '& might well be rarer' "; but the Evanses embrace it, "now standard usage." They write: "Fowler inveighs against the use of *conservative* as an adjective to mean *moderate* when qualifying a noun such as *figure* or *estimate* as 'perhaps the most ridiculous of slipshod extensions.' But the processes of language are indifferent to ridicule," and, in short, "Certainly in American usage *conservative* is now standard in the meaning of *moderate.*"

On *fiddle:* "Fowler incites us to rebel in the old word's defense. . . . But it is a lost cause." Of *Frankenstein* for the name of the monster: "None the less the term is now established ('almost, but surely not quite, sanctioned by custom,' cries Fowler in a plea which he must have felt to be futile)." Regarding *frock:* "Fowler called it 'a nurseryism of the same kind as *nighty* & *shimmy*' but it did no good." Of *phenomenal:* "Fowler foresaw this loose extension of the word's meaning and sternly condemned it as 'a sin against the English language.' But his condemnation, though reiterated by a host of lesser authorities, could not stay the word's efflorescence or degradation. Its primary meaning now is certainly 'extraordinary' or 'prodigious.' " The entry on *elevator* must be quoted entire:

> Fowler's classification of *elevator* as a 'superfluous word,' his designation of it as 'a cumbrous and needless Americanism,' and his stern suggestion that it be at least restricted to 'its hardly-avoidable commercial sense of grain-hoist,' fall on modern ears with all the tinkling quaintness of a harpsichord. It is now standard in American usage, established beyond challenge, too common to be cumbrous. *Lift,* which Fowler would have used in its stead, is, of course, so used in England, but even to traveled Americans it seems comic and to most Americans it would simply be incomprehensible.

Beneath these disagreements, as the tone suggests, admiration and even envy bubble. On *electrocute* they note "Fowler's assurance that this 'barbarism' jars the nerves of Latinists 'much more cruelly than the operation denoted jars those of its victim' must be accepted as a linguist's grim humor." They quote admiringly his rhetorical question on *meticulous,* "What strange charm makes this wicked word irresistible?" Sometimes they join him in his hopeless causes: fighting for *belly* as "a good, sensible, established, time-honored word" against the imprecise nice nellies who say *stomach* or even (horrors!) *tummy;* complaining that *banal* was borrowed from France when the English "had a dozen good words at home to choose from"; protesting that people debase the

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language by using *literally* to mean *figuratively* as in *I'm literally melting;* or announcing that *onomatopeic* is the preferred form of the adjective, with no reason given.

Sometimes the Evanses take a strong Fowlerian tone: "How our hearts sink at a prefatory *frankly,* for we know some brutality is to follow, and a craven brutality, too." At other times they are weakly Fowlerian, identifying a phrase that "has now become a pompous cliché if used seriously and a feeble jest if used facetiously." Sometimes it is his sort of indignant metaphor:

> Prudery moves on prurience as a snail in its own slime and leaves the trail of this slime over all that it touches. The gallant cock and the patient ass are forever banished from our speech and we have only the nursery equivalents of *rooster* and *donkey.*

The Evanses are most Fowlerian, perhaps, in their divagations. The entry on *hemlock* explains that the American hemlock is not Socrates' poisonous variety with some of the bold digressiveness of Fowler's entry on *fir, pine,* beginning "Most of us have wished vaguely & vainly at times that they knew a fir from a pine." Under *dog's life, lead a* we get a wild surrealist essay on the conditions of canine existence, culminating in:

> Certainly today, with the veterinarian's bill often exceeding the pediatrician's, with canine psychiatrists, with dog sitters, with vitamin-enriched canned dog food, with quilted coats and fur-lined booties, with rubberfoam mattresses, boarding houses, schools of etiquette and even orphanages, a dog's life can no longer serve as the trope of wretchedness and all phrases that so imply must be discarded as clichés.

The entry on *fit for a king* concludes:

> But the glory of kings has departed. Except for three or four housebroken survivors, a monarch's life today is not a happy one. What is now fit for a king? Shabby rooms in a hotel on the Riviera, overdue bills, the hissing conspirator, the yawning waiter, the sneering reporter, the gossip columnist, and in the shadow the assassin. *Fit for a king* is now a ghoul's cliché. Let it be mercifully abandoned.

APPARENTLY language usage books are now in the pioneering stage dictionaries were in, in Samuel Johnson's day, vehicles for the cranky and opinionated individual voice, which will eventually be supplanted by the more uniform, authoritative, and duller collaboration of anonymous scholars. We can get a vivid picture of the personality behind *A Dictionary of Contemporary American Usage.* For convenience let us call it "Bergen Evans," a figure we already know to some extent from his books and television programs. (This is unfair to sister Cornelia, an author and public figure in her own right, but it is probably inevitable in any collaboration with a television personality, and we can enter the reservation that any given feature of "Bergen Evans" may be hers.) The jacket says that Evans grew up in Ohio and England, studied at Miami and Harvard and was a Rhodes scholar at Oxford, is now an English professor at Northwestern, has written two books debunking popular fallacies, and is "the informative and witty moderator" of television programs. We could have guessed Harvard from the book's mockery of the *Boston accent* in a long entry, ending with the suggestion that if God no longer speaks in Hebrew, "He at least has a Boston accent"; combined with its indignant denial of the existence of anything that might be called a "Harvard" accent, the entry under that heading beginning "*Harvard accent* is a cliché of resentment that mingles malice and ignorance in about equal proportions." We can see traces of the debunking books in the confusion about *feral* mentioned earlier, and an entry on *lone wolf* repeats Evans's obsessive concern that no one continue to think wolves hunt in packs. The pattern is superficially Johnsonian, in its odd combination of provincial and metropolitan culture, and Johnson too had a doctorate. Evans clearly has the great lexicographer in mind, Johnson anecdotes and quotations run through his book, and in at least one place, echoing some strictures of Fowler's against *psychological moment,* he goes far beyond Fowler's tone to the authentic rhythms of the Grand Cham himself: "The phrase was woolly in its inception, confused in its translation, affected in its adoption, and misunderstood in its application."

Evans's true prototype, however, is neither of these British gentlemen, but America's own Henry L. Mencken, and there is some evidence that it is Mencken's whopping jackboots Evans is attempting to fill. There

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are considerable differences (it is hard to picture Mencken as a Rhodes scholar or a Harvard Ph.D., or as fiercely democratic in Evans's fashion) but there are even more considerable resemblances, and the special field Evans has staked out for himself, combining negative debunking of nonsense with positive labors on behalf of the American language, is Mencken's own. Evans has many of Mencken's irritating provincialities: he mocks the jargon of heraldry in *bar sinister* ("It's much simpler to say 'He was a bastard' "); he scorns the use of Latin quotations ("It serves only to mark one as either a hopeless pedant or an affected ass"); and he snipes at modern literature ("Spenser, in the manner later employed by T. S. Eliot, went out of his way to be obscure"). Evans has all of Mencken's ambivalent fascination with popular culture. He praises *L'il Abner, Pogo,* and *Mad Comics;* tells Goldwyn jokes; draws his examples from "The Stag at Eve" and Ogden Nash; goes out of his way to promote *Come Back Little Sheba* as "a moving treatment of a slattern"; and has a long, fascinated entry on Stephen Potter's *gamesmanship,* which he traces back to Chaucer. Unfortunately, Evans is just as apt to be wrong as right in these references: in a long article on *nicknames* he refers learnedly to "*Hot Lips* Paige," although the name is Page, and his friends called him "Lips"; "In the cynical terminology of bebop" Evans defines "A *square,* to the zoot-suit cognoscenti, is one who is not *hep,*" although zoot-suit is a stage earlier than bop, and of course the word is *hip.*

Evans has much of Mencken's smart-aleck quality, although, since he makes the astonishing claim that *smart aleck* has amatory connotations, and has been "replaced by the humorous, less disparaging, slang term *smarty pants,*" perhaps we should say, much of Mencken's smarty-pants quality. He remarks of *bright and early,* "The airlines report more delays because of fog in their early morning flights than at any other time of the day." Of *crossword puzzles,* "the malady lingers on." Of *stag:*

> In colloquial American usage it designates a man unaccompanied by a woman at a social gathering or a special party for men unaccompanied by their wives. It also means a swine which has been castrated after the maturation of the sex organs. There is no known etymological connection between these last meanings.

Some of Evans's entries are terribly cute, running to vulgar suggestions about saltpeter, comic differentiations ("Many trusties have been recruited from the second sort of trustee"), and such examples as, for *science,* "Boy, he's got that down to a science!"

Evans tries to dismiss each cliché with its own little joke: "*a feather in one's cap* is now bedraggled and droopy and no feather in anyone's stylistic cap"; as an image, *the apple of one's eye* "seems repulsively bloodshot and grotesque"; "*fresh as a daisy* is a wilted metaphor"; on *grin and bear it,* "one must bear it, but the grin has long since faded"; "*to feather one's nest* is strictly for the birds"; and so on. He advises his readers to reply to "Alas, poor Yorick" with "What, has this thing appear'd again tonight?" and other funny quotations from *Hamlet.* The best example of Evans's odd ambivalence toward mass culture is his attitude toward *Time.* He finds it "deft with this ploy" of gamesmanship, and mocks its pretense of omniscience, but is awed by the "brilliant creations" of its portmanteau words, adducing *cinemactress* in evidence. Even Mencken, who praises the "terse and dramatic words" of comic strips in one of the *American Language* books, would not have prostrated himself before the brilliance of *cinemactress.*

THE portrait of H. W. Fowler that emerges from *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage* is very different. We could have guessed that he was a schoolmaster and classical scholar, Tory, High Church Anglican (from the entry under *Catholic* that will not allow the term to be monopolized by Roman Catholics), Blimpish (recommending *doctress,* "Everyone knows the inconvenience of being uncertain whether a doctor is a man or a woman"), snobbish, and prejudiced. He is the oracle of the club, and he has the authentic voice:

> No; a barbarism is like a lie; it has got the start of us before we have found it out, & we cannot catch it; it is in possession, & our offers of other versions come too late.
>
> Poor old *foreword!* your vogue is past, your freshness faded; you are antiquated, vieux jeu, passé, démodé; your nose is out of joint.

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Fie! fie! a Greek tragedy and *protagonists?*

Can any man say that sort of thing & retain a shred of self-respect?

Sensitize is a word made for the needs of photography, & made badly.

Fowler is learned and literate but insistently not *literary;* "literary critics' word" is almost his strongest abuse: "*Distinction,* as a literary critics' word, is, like *charm,* one of those on which they fall back when they wish to convey that a style is meritorious, but have not time to make up their minds upon the precise nature of its merit." Fowler must have kept the members laughing their heads off, if we can judge by the entry under *pun:* the automatic discrediting of puns being "a sign at once of sheepish docility & desire to seem superior. Puns are good, bad, & indifferent, & only those who lack the wit to make them are unaware of the fact."

Fowler's characteristic posture is that of King Canute commanding the waves to cease ("So strong is the false belief that every bully must be a coward that acts requiring great courage are constantly described as cowardly if they are so carried out as not to give the victim a sporting chance"). He himself never fights unless he is hopelessly outnumbered, and it is never in the hope of victory, only to keep defeat from being total: "Is it too late to suggest that 'my betrothed' . . . should be given another chance?"; anyone who uses *nice* "in its more proper senses . . . does a real if small service to the language"; of *obnoxious* in the old sense of *open to attack,* "we may hope that scholarly writers will keep it alive." When Fowler surrenders, it is only after the last cat and rat have been eaten, and no one is left to man the ramparts: "Though *pandar* is the older & better form, it is useless to try to restore it"; "any attempt to keep *tetchy* alive seems due to a liking for curiosities." When Fowler accepted "sixteenmo" as proper for "sextodecimo," something died in Jacobite hearts all over the world.

Yet there is a stubborn practicality in him that tempers the purism, a Sancho Panza coexisting with Don Quixote: "We will split infinitives sooner than be ambiguous or artificial"; even "Seriously, our learned persons & possessors of special information should not, when they are writing for the general public, presume to improve the accepted vocabulary." Fowler's real heresy is what might be called Adamist, the idea that everything has its *true* name, the name God gave it, or as *Modern English Usage* phrases it, "among these names there is usually one that may be regarded as the thing's proper name, its *kurion onoma* or dominant name as the Greeks called it." He was, altogether, an original and a redoubtable figure, and it may be just as well that we shall not soon see his like again.

AT WHICH, inevitably, appears *A Dictionary of American-English Usage: Based on Fowler's Modern English Usage,** Fowler rewritten for Marlene and Stuart by Margaret Nicholson, head of the Contract and Copyright department of the Macmillan Company. Her preface admits "To tamper with Fowler has taken both humility and courage —or perhaps foolhardiness," and states the conditions of her venture fully:

> New words and idioms have come into the language since the publication of *Modern English Usage;* there are peculiarities of American speech and writing not recorded by Fowler; and many of us today, English and American, have neither the time nor the scholarship to follow through the fascinating but sometimes exasperating labyrinth of Greek and Latin parallels and Fowler's Socratic method of teaching by wrong examples. *American-English Usage* is an adaptation of MEU, not a replacement. AEU is a simplified MEU, with American variations, retaining as much of the original as space allowed. Many of the longer articles had to be shortened, many of the more academic ones and those less pertinent to usage today were omitted, to make room for new entries and illustrations. Fowler's own mannerisms and pedantries—and I am sure he would have been the last to deny them—have been left untouched. There was a temptation sometimes to soften the sting of "illiterate," "journalese," "lady novelists," "uneducated writers"; perhaps Fowler himself would have tempered some of them had he revised his book, but only Fowler could decide that. They have been left as he wrote them.

Miss Nicholson has perhaps not tampered with Fowler quite enough. She leaves many of his pronunciations untouched, even where, as in *parliament* ("Pron. par'lament"), I think many Americans join me in saying "par'lyament." To his strictures against

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pronouncing the *t* in *often,* which he says is "practiced by two oddly consorted classes —the academic speakers who affect a more precise enunciation than their neighbors'" and "the uneasy half-literates who like to prove that they can spell," she adds a parenthesis noting that the Oxford English Dictionary and Webster "more charitably" allow the pronunciation as an accepted regional variation. (It should be recorded that the Evans book offers no guidance to pronunciation, for no stated reason).

Miss Nicholson has cut Fowler's explanation of *genteelisms* and his long list of examples, but has neglected to add any mention of the English U and Non-U controversy, which was precisely over the class associations of these paired words: lower-class people using the genteel *serviette* where their blunter betters say *napkin.* She has left in and even amplified Fowler's instructions (for Ernest Bevin's generation, perhaps) on how to address a lord, although it would be more useful for Marlene and Stuart to know how to address a Congressman, and she has retained his complaint that the Japanese example has ruined the fine old simplicity of British titles. She has preserved the little gem of an essay on how to tell firs from pines, although she has changed Fowler's "most of us have wished . . . they knew" to the more colloquial "most of us have wished . . . we knew." Miss Nicholson has omitted Fowler's indignant entry on *frock,* but has not replaced it with some explanation for the confusing *negligee;* she has added a brief entry on *O. K.,* which Fowler scorned to notice (she removed his *okapi* to do it), but nothing on *Hi;* she has added *ingenuous* but not *disingenuous;* she omits many words that since Fowler's time have come into general use, such as *denture,* or general misuse, such as *fulsome.*

Miss Nicholson adds an entry on *pinch hitter,* and takes a properly Fowerlian line to it, that it is often misused to mean an inferior rather than, as it does in baseball, a superior substitute. She keeps Fowler's two explanations of *burlesque* as a form of caricature, without taking any notice of the fact that, in the words of the Evanses, "In America *burlesque* has a special meaning, one probably much better known to the masses than its older meaning: a theatrical entertainment featuring coarse comedy and dancing." She preserves Fowler's assurance that those who wish to mark their adherence to the technical sense of the word *myth,* rather than the popular sense, do so by pronouncing it with the long *i*—but if there ever were any such people they have long since gone. Miss Nicholson retains Fowler's entry on *phallus,* which consists in its entirety of the statement that the plural is *phalli* (the word ought to be *phallos* and *phalloi,* there being no reason to take a Greek word in the Latin form), and she makes no mention of *penis,* which has become the general respectable word in America, popularized I suspect by nursery school teachers and people Fowler would call doctresses.

Miss Nicholson's principal alteration has been to give up on Fowler's lost causes, surrendering in each case to the waves of popular usage. Where he says that the singular *aborigine* "is felt to be anomalous & avoided or disliked," she says "though gaining in popularity, even among scholars, is still avoided or disliked by many." With the Evanses, she repudiates Fowler and accepts *asset* ("through usage has been accepted in both US and Brit."), *caption* ("firmly established in US"), *donate* ("chiefly US"), *electrocute* (no mention), *elevator* ("standard US, *lift* Brit."), *Frankenstein* ("Most US dictionaries now give as a second meaning of *Frankenstein* the monster so created"), and many others. Where Fowler took no stand, she can give in even more readily, with the typical comment "The misuse is so frequent as to be almost established," or "undoubtedly right, but the battle is in vain." Thus Webster gives the pronunciation as *Grēn'wich* Village, "but it is not commonly so called there." Miss Nicholson quotes Sir Ernest Gowers accepting *I will go* for simple future tense with the slogan "If we go by practice rather than by precept," and on that basis even accepts *up* as an intensive (*eat up your food*), at which we can imagine Fowler roaring like the Father Bear.

Despite her introductory statement, Miss Nicholson omits Fowler's strictures against *banal, banality* ("These are LITERARY CRITICS' WORDS, imported from France by a class of writers whose jaded taste relishes novel or imposing jargon") and a number of other diatribes and harangues, as she omits his eight pages of French words with phonet-

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ic pronunciation, his examples of poetry, and much else that gives his book its color and variety. What she has added is mostly of a specifically American character: a protest against *irregardless,* which he had probably never heard; notes that words like *exotic* and *facet* have become American "VOGUE WORDS" (the second replacing Fowler's entry on *facetiae,* apparently not an American vogue word); and so forth. On *vase,* Fowler says flatly "Pron. vahz (not vawz)"; Miss Nicholson says, in a burst of patriotism, "For most Americans the natural pronunciation is vās. This is not a 'US illiteracy'; it was the earlier pronunciation in England." Where Fowler says the plural of *dwarf* is *dwarves,* and the Evanses say "The plural is *dwarfs,* not *dwarves,*" Miss Nicholson offers a compromise, "Usually *dwarfs,* rarely *dwarves.*"

MUCH of her effort, not surprisingly, has been with Fowler's race prejudices. His remarkable entry on *nigger,* "Applied to others than full or partial negroes, is felt as an insult by the person described," becomes in her hands "Sometimes used familiarly between two Negroes with affection. Used by a non-Negro it is offensive." Where Fowler's only entry on *darky* consists of instructions for forming the plural, she writes "Spell *darky,* if used; pl. *darkies.* (Colloq., often offensive.)" Fowler's entry on *Hebrew, Israelite, Jew, Semite* contains the statement that the word *Jew* is sometimes avoided because it "has certain traditional implications (as usury, anti-Christianity) that are unsuited to the context"; her entry on *Hebrew, Israelite, Israeli, Jew, Semite* says nothing of the sort. Miss Nicholson oddly reprints without alteration Fowler's statement that "the normal uses" are *A Chinaman* and *Three Chinamen,* as against the Evanses' much more accurate "In the United States the preferred form is *Chinese,* as in *one Chinese* and *two Chinese.*"

Miss Nicholson is in personality and opinion apparently very unlike her predecessor. Where he saw the United States as a nation of semi-literate aboriginals, she is at least defensively American: "To reject these words simply because they are 'chiefly US' is evidence of a sorry lack of faith in our own culture." Where he is backward-looking and austere, she is forward-looking and chatty. Fowler might have admired her distinction "*Eatable* implies a measure of palatability, whereas even tripe is *edible,*" but what would he have made of the world casually assumed by her entry on *sloe-eyed,* "The mystery and romance writers who describe their heroines thus seem to be thinking of the effects of sloe gin rather than the bluish-black plum"?

What one sees in the usage books, in short, are the crotchets of strongly marked personalities, but behind them and ultimately determining, the shifting patterns of the culture. To speak respectably and be regarded as an educated person are perhaps not very impressive ideals, but beyond them lie more impressive visions of *being* genuinely respectable and educated. The entry in the Evans book on *genteel; gentle; Gentile* points out that all three words are from the Latin *gentilis,* of the same clan or tribe. Some of the fun of reading usage books is watching the ceaseless quest for gentility inevitably undercut by the tendency of every euphemistic word, however delicate in inception, to become as vulgar as the word it supplants. *Cuspidor* was taken from the Portuguese as a refined way to say *spittoon,* and *cemetery* ("sleeping place") was a nice euphemism for *graveyard* or *boneyard.* Privy (a place to be private) was succeeded by *toilet* (a place to dress), then *bathroom,* soon *washroom* and its Latin form *lavatory,* eventually *powder room;* yet the veneer never stays on for long. It is more delicate to say *pluck* than *guts,* although *pluck* too means intestines, and it is much more delicate to say "Poppycock!" than some coarser equivalent, although the Evanses assure us that it is a colloquial Dutch word for a cake of pap-shaped semi-liquid dung. These matters may be ultimately not in the dictionary but in the heart and mind, as the Evanses say, or buried deep in the culture's history. Those not of the dominant clan, Marlene or Stuart, pursuing *gentility* or *Gentility,* might better pursue the truly *gentle,* that archaic characteristic of gentlefolk, and respect the language, like any tool, to keep it sharp. Perhaps a word has sensibilities too, like a Chinese, and is hurt when incorrectly addressed; perhaps even a word bleeds when you cut it.

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THE STUDY OF MAN

FREUD AND SCIENTIFIC TRUTH

An Exchange

LILLIAN BLUMBERG MCCALL, who here takes vigorous exception to HANS MEYERHOFF's article "Freud the Philosopher" in the January COMMENTARY, has written often on psychoanalysis in these pages. Her contributions include "Does Psychoanalysis Cure?" (November 1950) and "The Hidden Springs of Sigmund Freud" (August 1954). Mrs. McCall has worked as a clinical and industrial psychologist and is presently engaged in writing a History of Honors at the University of Colorado under a Rockefeller grant. Mr. Meyerhoff, who replies to Mrs. McCall, is visiting professor of humanities at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the author of *Time in Literature*.

Lillian Blumberg McCall: I sympathize with Hans Meyerhoff's feeling that "so many words have recently poured forth from so many pens that the mind is surfeited . . . it is almost embarrassing to join in praise of Dr. Jones's biography." Those critics who reviewed all three volumes showed definite signs of intellectual exhaustion. John Dollard simply informed his readers that he had said everything already. Mr. Meyerhoff remarks that "this last volume has its flaws and defects: it does not achieve the same mastery over its diffuse and difficult subject matter that made the first volume such an exciting adventure." Not a word about the nature of the "flaws and defects." The atmosphere of piety is intolerably sticky. The idolatry touched off by the centennial, and reinforced by Ernest Jones's adulatory biography, has made it almost impossible to discuss psychoanalysis seriously. Freud may have been a great man but he is not sacrosanct. A dissenting opinion is in order.

Everyone says of Freud that he was single-minded in the cause of truth. Yet there was at least one occasion on which he deliberately suppressed the truth. When he realized that the data from which he deduced the seduction theory were wrong, he did not publicly retract the theory but passed it over in silence. Not for many years—and only after his fame was secure—did he give an account of the incident. He admits, quite casually, that he may himself have "suggested" the seduction tales to his patients. It would be interesting to know—and it would shed light on the nature of "suggestion" in psychoanalytic treatment—whether patients continued to tell such stories as *actual occurrences* after Freud had decided these tales were wish fantasies. As far as I know, the question has not been raised in the professional journals.

On many occasions Freud, as we say nowadays, "resisted" the truth. He was fully aware that biologists reject Lamarck's theory of the inheritance of acquired characteristics and why they reject it. Writes Dr. Jones: "It is not easy to account for the fixity with which [Freud] held this opinion and the determination with which he ignored all the biological evidence to the contrary." I suggest that Freud held to the Lamarckian theory with such "recalcitrance" for the most obvious of reasons: it was necessary for the logic of his system. Without the Lamarckian supposition the argument for many of Freud's key theories falls apart. Dr. Jones admits this, but asserts that "there are alternative possibilities, e.g., along Darwinian lines, which would preserve the essence of Freud's conclusions." This would be a neat trick, but Dr. Jones does not pause to perform it.

Freud ignored his critics. Dr. Jones dismisses them with prejudice. The following is a bald-faced distortion by omission: "Kroeber,

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perhaps the most distinguished of American ethnologists, was thought to have delivered the *coup de grâce* to the concept of a primal crime by listing ten objections to it, but they contained little more than expressions of disbelief." And so much for the man who is believed by many to be the world's greatest anthropologist! Professor Kroeber's ten objections indicate that the "facts" on which Freud built *Totem and Taboo* were at best dubious and at worst wrong, according to available anthropological evidence. Professor Kroeber's intention, which Dr. Jones appears not to have noticed, was to criticize Freud's *procedure*. He writes:

"The above enumeration [the ten objections] has been compiled only far enough to prove the essential method of the work, which is to evade the painful process of arriving at a large certainty by the positive determination of smaller certainties and their unwavering addition, irrespective of whether each augments or diminishes the sum total of conclusions arrived at. For this method the author substitutes a plan of multiplying into one another fractional certainties—that is, more or less remote possibilities—without recognition that the multiplicity of factors must successively decrease the probability of the product. It is the old expedient of pyramiding the hypotheses, which, if theory had to be paid for like stocks or gaming cards, would be less frequently indulged in."*

FREUD was aware of the reasons for the overwhelming rejection of the death instinct theory, but he shrugged them off with the remark that he could "think no other way." Dr. Jones reports that all psychoanalysts have, by now, repudiated the doctrine. Mr. Meyerhoff states: "I am not competent to judge the clinical evidence. . . ." Lionel Trilling employs the same conceit of humility: "Whether or not Freud's formulations of the death instinct stand up under scientific inquiry, I of course cannot venture to say." Why not? The literature on the subject is extensive, and neither Mr. Meyerhoff nor Mr. Trilling can fail to be aware of it. The conceit of humility makes what is essential to the argument appear to be irrelevant. This, in turn, makes it possible to proceed *as if* the death instinct theory is true. For Mr. Meyerhoff the significance of the "death wish" is that it puts "one source of suffering within the organism itself. The human being is divided even in his deepest layers. . . ." For Mr. Trilling the death wish serves to "confirm our sense of Freud's oneness with the tradition of literature. For literature has always recorded an impulse of the self to find affirmation even in its own extinction, even *by* its own extinction." According to Freud, the death instinct is a characteristic of all forms of life which impels the organism to strive to return to an earlier inorganic stage. How Mr. Trilling can read "affirmation" into this theory escapes me. Nor is it clear to me how the death instinct puts "one source of suffering within the organism itself," since the goal of the instinct is to *rid* the organism of suffering—by the negation of the self.

A man who is single-minded in the cause of truth does not deliberately ignore it. Yet Freud tells us that he purposely did not read Schopenhauer and Nietzsche *because* he had been told that their ideas were similar to his. As far as I know, the only other contemporary critic who has been struck by the strangeness of this boast is David Riesman. It seems obvious, as Mr. Riesman says, that Freud, in this instance, was most concerned with being thought original. Can anyone imagine a physicist *choosing* to ignore what has been done in his field?

Dr. Jones has described in detail the stubbornness with which Freud clung to some of his stranger ideas—particularly his belief in mental telepathy and Fliess's weird biological notions. Although these ideas once greatly disturbed Dr. Jones, who tried to dissuade Freud from certain projects in connection with "thought transference" (because he feared that Freud's odd ideas would give psychoanalysis a bad name), he now treats them as the lovable eccentricities of genius.

One of the chief defects of Dr. Jones's biography is this double standard of judgment. He does not hesitate to denigrate others in the name of psychoanalysis, but similar criticisms of Freud he calls "malicious" and "mendacious." He is cautious about the living, but pulls out all the stops in his castigation of the dead. (I was amazed at how delicately he handled the question of Jung's anti-Semitism. Such delicacy appears to me unnecessary, in

*I am indebted to Professor Omer Stewart, chairman of the Anthropology Department at the University of Colorado, for calling my attention to Professor Kroeber's two papers on *Totem and Taboo*, and for many interesting discussions on Professor Kroeber's progressive disillusionment with psychoanalysis.

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the light of Jung's close cooperation with the Nazis which continued into 1940.) Mr. Trilling was inadvertently led to infer from Dr. Jones's use of the term "cyclothymic" that Otto Rank was a psychotic. It turns out that all Dr. Jones meant was that Rank sometimes suffered from moods of depression. Dr. Jones is, as we say in the trade, "emotionally involved." He is always fretting that this or that one's emotional instability will lead him to disloyalty. He is forever warning Freud, who doesn't always listen. But always in the end Freud must admit that Jones was right again. What a dreary story! Was Freud a man or a government that loyalty should have been a matter of such urgency? Dr. Jones never concedes that the grounds for dissent, except where he himself dissents, can ever be anything but neurotic.

VIRTUALLY all of Freud's eulogists, like Mr. Meyerhoff, shift the argument about the validity of psychoanalysis to the "philosophical" level. Rather early in the exposition of Freudianism, its converts, ever fearful that the human intelligence is not equipped to grapple with the portent of Freudian thought, cautioned the public that psychoanalysis is a psychiatric therapy, a scientific theory, and a philosophy. This tripartite division has been of enormous tactical advantage to the Freudians, serving the same purpose as the doctrine of the double truth, a strategy for peaceful coexistence with science worked out by 19th-century religionists. Of a therapy we ask that it work, of a theory that it be verifiable, and of a philosophy that it excite the "moral imagination." The psychoanalytic triple truth is intended to defeat any frontal assault on the Freudian citadel. Attack one stronghold and the Freudians are found to be defending the others.

Few of the eulogists mentioned psychoanalytic treatment. In the biography, Dr. Jones makes remarkably few claims for it. Freud, in his early papers, asserted that the success of the psychoanalytic treatment was justification enough for the psychoanalytic movement. It is impossible to overestimate the authority psychoanalysis derives from its early miracles. But as soon as it became evident—it did not for many years—that psychoanalysis failed as often as any other psychiatric treatment, the Freudians began to stress the "constitutional factor" in neurosis, and to insist that only philistines set any store by mere "results." Psychoanalysts maintain that the treatment is justified despite its costliness, its lengthy duration, and its frequent failure, because it is the means by which psychoanalysis investigates human nature and seeks to verify its interpretations. Any attention given to the therapeutic failures of psychoanalysis—according to the psychoanalysts—is a disservice to the cause of pure science.

However, the bridge between psychoanalysis and science is exceedingly frail and likely to collapse under the lightest traffic. The psychoanalyst's interpretations are true if the patient accepts them as such. But they are not false if the patient doesn't; in such a case he is "resisting." Unconscious resistance to the truth is a doctrine of psychoanalytic infallibility. Ernst Kris wrote in 1947: ". . . the interest of psychiatrists, who alone have access to the full set of observational data, can hardly be expected to center on problems of semantic and systematic clarifications at a time when the rapid advance of clinical insight attracts their attention. A time lag exists even between clinical experience and published case histories; the clinical tradition, at the present time, is richer and both more concrete and more precise than the psychoanalytic literature tends to reveal." The psychoanalysts still haven't found time for "problems of semantic and systematic clarifications." Still, we are supposed to believe that psychoanalysts know what they are doing, and that they know more than they are able to tell us about what they are doing.

The key theories of psychoanalysis remain unverified. Given their *form*, their verification presents insurmountable difficulties. It is logically impossible to disprove a theory that explains all effects by a single cause. In his essays on Freud's view of art and artists, Lionel Trilling implies that when a single explanation —fear of castration—is offered for contradictory consequences (e.g. for *both* impotence and "extravagant exploits of sexuality") we know nothing more than we knew before. Art cannot be explained by the artist's neurosis: "we are all neurotic" but we are not all artists. However, Mr. Trilling did not extend his remarks to rescue humanity at large from the indignities of reductionism. He merely exempted artists from the Freudian canon.

IF FREUDIANISM fails as a therapy, and if its scientific claims are dubious, it is nevertheless put forward as a profound view of life. But this view of life presents us with certain problems in the sphere of morality and ethics.

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As Mr. Meyerhoff says: ". . . I am not sure that we have even begun to think seriously about the baffling consequences that this new look of man has for such problems as human motivation, freedom, and responsibility." Having raised this question, Mr. Meyerhoff immediately drops it. Perhaps because there can be no conception of freedom and responsibility in a system that attributes the motivation of all human behavior to unconscious, irrational, and conflicting forces over which consciousness has virtually no control?

Later, Mr. Meyerhoff remarks, ". . . it is curious to note that the Christian dogma of 'original sin,' which . . . corresponds to Freud's doctrine . . . again commands a respectful hearing. Apparently what makes good sense in a theological context, where the evil is absolute, does not make any sense in a natural or human setting, where, as Freud insisted, man might at least achieve some mastery over himself." I assume that the portion of psychoanalytic doctrine Mr. Meyerhoff has in mind to which original sin corresponds, is the primal crime—the murder of the primal father by his jealous, unruly sons. It is possible to uphold the position that neither original sin *nor* the primal crime makes sense in any setting. Given the fantastic possibility that the unconsciously inherited memory of the primal crime—assuming that it ever took place and that a specific memory trace can be inherited—could be brought, somehow, to the consciousness of every human being, would it help us to solve any of our present human problems in our present human setting? Freud, in *Civilization and Its Discontents,* indicated that there was virtually no hope that "man might at least achieve some mastery over himself." Mr. Meyerhoff quotes a famous passage to that effect. Is it strange, therefore, that "the standard practice is to affirm the truth of Freud's discovery and then to proceed as if it didn't make any difference"? If Freud is right what difference can it make? There are no elect in the Freudian neo-Calvinism. Mr. Meyerhoff's complaint is that everyone pays lip-service to Freudianism, but few are really religious. This has been the complaint of every religion once it has become institutionalized.

MANY of the eulogists, including Mr. Meyerhoff, used the occasion of the centennial for broadsides against the so-called cultural deviationists. The revisionists are highly vulnerable targets. They substitute one monism for another, their theories are as unsusceptible as Freud's to verification, and the results of their treatment are equally questionable. But the Freudians do not attack them on methodological but on philosophical grounds. To attack them methodologically would mean opening up the Freudian system itself to painful examination. Instead, the revisionists are accused of being light-minded optimists. But is a pessimistic theory founded on false premises any "deeper" than an optimistic theory founded on false premises? The Freudians are attacking, through the revisionists, the tradition of the Enlightenment which holds that man is a rational animal who can solve his problems through the use of his intelligence.

At the philosophical level one does not argue with psychoanalysts, but with their literary followers. Freud was a great literary stylist, and literary men have always stood guardian over his ideas. Theirs has been the responsibility for maintaining the intellectual "tone" of psychoanalysis. The literary men, not the psychoanalysts, bring forward for discussion the particular aspects of Freudian speculation that are relevant to the current intellectual climate. These change with the times. In the 20's, the rationalistic, optimistic elements of Freud's thought were used to attack Victorian morality. Today, Freud's "tragic view"—man as an irrational animal self-doomed to extinction—commands Freud's literary followers. Whatever view of Freud is current in any given time tells us as much about the mood of the period as it does about psychoanalysis itself. The Freudian psychology has shown itself highly adaptable to the needs of the *Zeitgeist* because psychoanalysis, like all monistic systems, is full of ambiguity, inconsistency, contradiction. There are as many interpretations of Freud as of Marx, each claiming to be the Word.

Jerome Bruner, a Freudian fellow-traveler, says of psychoanalysis that it "is not a theory in the conventional sense, it is a metaphor, an analogy, a way of conceiving man, a drama." That is, Freudianism is "true" in the sense that *Hamlet* is true—but *not* in the sense that the Copernican theory is true. At least, not yet. Freudianism has attracted many of the disillusioned converts of another thinker whose words were thought to be sacred in the 30's. Hardly anyone now asks how much of the truth Freud actually discovered, but the question remains open. It is the crucial question.

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Hans Meyerhoff: I cannot, of course, speak for the others mentioned in Mrs. McCall's communication, but since it was my review-article of the Jones biography which triggered her thoughts, I shall reply on behalf of my own treatment of Jones and Freud.

To the late Dr. Jones I owe an apology: I did not review his book on its own terms. Instead, I picked out a special problem and wrote my article around it. In the final chapter, Dr. Jones suggested that the widespread acceptance of Freud's ideas may actually be "a subtle form of rejection, a protection against assimilation of their profound import." I am glad to record that there is nothing subtle about Mrs. McCall's rejection; but I seem to have failed in conveying the theme of my article. It was not a standard review. Thus I did not spell out the "flaws and defects"; I did not spell out the virtues either. One reason for not dwelling upon the shortcomings of this last volume was that they were obviously due to the fact that the work was completed in a race against death: Dr. Jones died on February 11.*

Nor was it my intention to debate or to defend the *truth* of psychoanalysis. What I tried to do was pursue the specific point raised by Dr. Jones in his concluding chapter and to show, by a number of examples, how our culture seems to have absorbed and transformed Freudianism into something which has little or nothing to do with Freud's own ideas. I noted in my review (as does Mrs. McCall) that "Freudian psychology has shown itself highly adaptable to the Zeitgeist"; but my point was precisely that the *Zeitgeist* is not Freud's *Geist*. This is not to make a religion out of Freud; it is a comment on our culture. If the point is worth making at all, it ought to be made in the way in which somebody might criticize the distortions of Marx in Soviet ideology, or the misuse of Nietzsche's ideas by the Nazis.

My small contribution to this subject, however, is not what Mrs. McCall is really shooting at; she is after bigger game. Her chief concern is to assail (a) the truth of psychoanalysis and (b) Freud's personal honesty. Unfortunately, she does not distinguish between these two objects of her attack, though they are quite different: at one level she offers a critique of a scientific theory, at the other she casts a grave slur upon a man's character. (She confused these issues in her treatment of Dr. Jones, too.)

I have little to say on the first point, since this is not the place for a serious, technical debate. Everybody knows (as Freud did too) that psychoanalytic treatment is not the only cure for emotional disturbances; and everybody knows that there are still people who think psychoanalytic theory is hogwash from beginning to end. But the perennial refutations of psychoanalysis are by now becoming rather tedious. Freud's basic contributions, not unlike those of Marx, have a way of surviving both their vulgar distortions and their learned refutations. In any case, Mrs. McCall's critique raises only one genuine issue, i.e. her complaint that "verification presents insurmountable difficulties" in psychoanalysis. To put it differently, psychoanalytic propositions are often such that it is very difficult to specify *objective* tests which could verify (or falsify) them. That is, indeed, a serious problem, but it is hardly news to anyone at all familiar with the subject. What Mrs. McCall fails to tell her readers is that theoreticians in the psychoanalytic movement, including the late Ernst Kris, have been working on this problem for a long time. Nor is it the only logical difficulty encountered in psychoanalytic theory; but these are matters which the reader seriously interested in logical problems can study elsewhere.

There is no need to conceal these difficulties; they are characteristic of many revolutionary scientific theories. Let us take the example of quantum mechanics: it is an ingenious theory; in its application to the manufacturing of bombs, it may even offer a radical solution to what ails mankind; but in addition to these scientific and practical aspects, quantum mechanics also presents a great many philosophical puzzles which are by no means resolved—and which interest some people beyond the making of new discoveries or new bombs. Now what Freud called "metapsychology," his over-all theory of man and culture, is a kind of philosophy, too, even though he did not like to think so. Hence there is nothing wrong with considering these ideas in a philosophical or historical context. I did not trick the reader by shifting the argument "to

*It would be a fitting tribute to Dr. Jones, I think, if somebody were to take the massive work he has left and make a finished (perhaps one-volume) product out of it.

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the philosophical level." Philosophy happens to be my field, and philosophical problems arise in connection with any scientific theory.

THESE points would hardly require a rejoinder, were they not tied in with the major theme of Mrs. McCall's communication: her assault upon Freud's intellectual integrity. First, according to her, Freud "deliberately suppressed the truth" in the case of his original belief that the seduction tales told by his patients were true in the literal sense. The basis for this attack is a testimony to one of Freud's finest hours. For the original mistake, which caused him a great deal of anguish, was the source for the exciting discovery (and truth) that the wish might be as significant as the deed in the economy of the psyche. What more do we expect of a man than to admit that he first made a mistake, but that the mistake, fortunately, gave him a clue to a great insight? I wish mistakes like that would happen to me.

Secondly, Freud "deliberately ignored" the truth, in that he refused to read Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, because he was told that "their ideas were similar to his." I am inclined to think that he read both of them—philosophers, by the way—and had an especially high regard for Nietzsche. But the question is not whether he did or did not know their works, but what his motive may have been for not reading them, or for not remembering that he had read them. Fear of losing his claim to originality, as Mrs. McCall says? Now Freud was certainly human enough to care whether his discoveries were original. It so happens that they *were;* for neither Schopenhauer nor Nietzsche, despite their greatness and originality, discovered psychoanalysis. Freud did. Besides, why suspect a bad motive when there may be a better one? Freud did not hesitate to acknowledge his debt to the great poets and writers who knew the "truths" of psychoanalysis long before he came along to discover its "method." Thus if he shied away from Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, it may have been because he was afraid lest psychoanalysis be tainted by too much exposure to philosophical speculation. Freud struggled hard to keep on the straight and narrow path of science—whether he succeeded or not. It was only in his old age that he freely admitted he was returning to the philosophical interests which he had resisted all his life.

Finally, Freud "ignored his critics," particularly Kroeber's critique of *Totem and Taboo.* Only he didn't, not in this case at least, as Mrs. McCall might have learned from reading *Moses and Monotheism.* What he did was to stick to his guns despite the criticism: "I have often been vehemently reproached for not changing my opinion in later editions of *Totem and Taboo,* since more recent ethnologists have without exception discarded Robertson Smith's theories and have in part replaced them by others which differ extensively. I would reply that these alleged advances in science are well known to me. Yet I have not been convinced. . . . Contradiction is not always refutation; a new theory does not necessarily denote progress. Above all, however, I am not an ethnologist, but a psychoanalyst. It is my good right to select from ethnological data what would serve me for my analytic work. . . ."

Now this may again show what a stubborn character Freud was, but it may also show something else. Perhaps he was willing to take certain risks of being wrong which lesser men do not take in order to be always right. The mistakes of genius are often worth more than the discoveries of little minds, and if Mrs. McCall thinks I am again indulging in sententious, pious eulogy, let her be reminded of another case: Einstein believed in the philosophy of Spinoza, including the postulate of a universal causal determinism in nature, even though the theories of modern physics—to which he had made such revolutionary contributions—rendered this belief rather silly in the eyes of his scientific peers.

Nor am I prepared to say that Freud was simply wrong in *Totem and Taboo.* I don't know enough about the matter to pass judgment. Mrs. McCall calls this attitude "the conceit of humility"; she has forgotten that there are times when fools rush in. . . . At any rate, it is no news that the public, including the experts, greeted *Totem and Taboo* with skepticism and scorn. Perhaps it *is* news that this "fairy tale" seems again to be treated with more respect. If Mrs. McCall cites the authority of ethnology, others can, too. "I am convinced that the essential universality of the Oedipus complex and of sibling rivalry is now established by the anthropological record." Thus Clyde Kluckhohn in a personal communication to Dr. Jones. Mrs. McCall may quote one eminent authority; I cite another.

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The final verdict, obviously, isn't in yet. That is precisely what Freud said in 1939.

I don't know whether this amounts to another eulogy, but I have no reason to evade the issue. Freud prevailed over the worst possible abuse and vilification to become "a maker of the modern mind," as the phrase goes. Mrs. McCall says he "may have been a great man, but he was not sacrosanct." Who said he was? Freud never claimed infallibility for himself—as Dr. Jones has shown abundantly and movingly in the three volumes of his biography. Greatness will do for praise. There is little enough in our world as it is; and compared with his critics and his epigones, Freud looms like a giant. It is embarrassing to have to defend him again—at this time, in these pages, and against such scurrilous charges. Freud would not have thought it worth bothering.

MY FATHER DIED IN ALEXANDRIA

LEO HABER

(Note: Some of the places associated here with Socrates, Feffer the Soviet Yiddish writer, and the poet's uncle—all killed by their respective states—are unhistorical.)

I

My father died in Alexandria
Though born in Ashkelon.
He lies in a cemetery within the city
Larger than his natal town.

If we must be born at all, and we
Have no control thereon—
Better to be born in wide sunlight
Than in shadow of the crown.

But if we must die some day, and who
Would want to outlive his son—
Better to die in a cultured city
Than where desert sands shift and run.

II

My father died in Jerusalem
Though born in Bethlehem.
This is the way of the worldly wise—
To give up milk for phlegm.

So Socrates born in a sour suburb
Drank hemlock in Athens,
And my father's brother from Dobromil
Drank gall in Bergen-Belsen,

And Itzik Feffer born in Shpola
Drank dust in Birobidjan;
Shakespeare alone left London town
To drink of the sweet Avon.

III

My father died in great New York
Though born in Dobromil.
He made the palsied pilgrimage
From a wooden house to steel.

He didn't become a glorious Greek,
Or a god sprung from the soil,
He didn't become a lampshade—
His trip was still worthwhile.

And when he died his home-town folk
And family were on hand
To lead him through New York to rest
In running shifting sand.

LEO HABER's first published poem appeared in COMMENTARY, in the April 1956 number. This is his fourth contribution to our pages.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Union Democracy

To the Editor of Commentary:

Paul Jacobs ("Union Democracy and the Public Good," January 1958) raises the fundamental question of just how trade unions should be organized for the common good. In *Union Democracy,* my colleagues and I assumed what he holds up to question: that a democratic union, in which the members have a high degree of control over their officers, is a desirable thing. Mr. Jacobs asks: desirable for what? For the members' economic gains? Dictatorial unions, such as the teamsters, are often just as powerful bargaining agents, sometimes more so. For the common good of society? Other dictatorial unions, like the ILGWU, may do far more for the common good under the benevolent and liberal philosophy of their leader. For enlightened unionism? The democratic ITU enforces featherbedding and lobbies for archaic voting laws in New York State in order to create printing jobs.

These faults in the ITU, and in other relatively democratic unions, turn out to be precisely the ones which we find in democratic government in the larger society. A democratic regime is not as efficient as an authoritarian regime can be (as Russia's satellite successes attest); and it often operates to satisfy immediate self-interests of the members, rather than broader, less selfish goals, or even longer-range self-interest. Its list of faults is extensive.

In the organization of society as a whole, we are willing to live with these faults in order to insure that control over us is, in the final analysis, lodged in our own hands. . . . But perhaps, as Mr. Jacobs suggests, this goal of a truly democratic society can be better realized by a sub-structure of voluntary organizations which sacrifice internal democracy for external strength; or organizations (and this is not the same thing, though Mr. Jacobs doesn't make a distinction) which work for the good of the larger society rather than the selfish interests of their members.

It is hard to see how the latter aim could be in fact realized in a democratic society: how could the larger society insure that the voluntary organizations which make it up are contributing to the "common good"? Only by controlling the leadership, through the government of the society itself. But a society organized in this way, with leaders of all intermediate organizations responsible to those above and not to their members below, becomes indistinguishable from Hitler's Germany or Soviet Russia, where the first responsibility of trade union leaders, and leaders of all organizations, is to the state.

The other aim which is apparently realized by totalitarian control of an organization is strength, freed of the inner conflicts of a democracy. Such strength is illusory in two ways: first, insofar as the strength is not responsible to the members, it is strength at the command of the leaders alone, to be used as they see fit (or, if they are to be controlled by the larger society, as Mr. Jacobs' argument would imply, as *those* leaders see fit). In present-day totalitarian unions, the examples of misused power are only too abundant. The Dave Becks outnumber the Dave Dubinskys. . . .

Such strength is also illusory in a more long-range sense, for a union or other organization can die from within probably more easily than it can be killed from without. The constant struggles of a democratic organization, the fact that policies, once made, are policies of the members, not just the leaders, means that a truly democratic organization has little to fear from internal decay. (Good examples of the strength of unionism instilled by the ITU's democratic processes are abundant: printers have always been disproportionately active in local trade union councils and state Federations of Labor; and during the CIO organization drives in the South in the 40's, printers in towns and cities often actively aided the cause, sometimes even dropping their work to help organize, while the other AFL unions generally obstructed the CIO's efforts.)

For these reasons, totalitarian organizations in a democratic society seem a contradiction in terms. If the control of a society is to truly flow from below, it must do so not only via elected representatives, but also through the interest groups, the voluntary associations, the organizations whose forces, in balance, shape the policies of our government.

In essence, I am saying that a democratic society is composed of a multitude of competing

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groups which cluster around certain interests and values, and that if the "values of this society" are to be furthered, then it is imperative that the groups themselves be controlled by the interests and values of the members which make them up. . . .

The question of how to create an optimum democratic system, one in which immediate self-interests will not always rule, one in which a far-sighted foreign policy arises naturally from the process of politics, is an important one. But the question is not to be answered for the larger society by denying its relevance for the voluntary organizations which go to make up the society.

More to the point than rationalizing the present totalitarianism of our trade unions would be to raise the question: how can men come to have more control over their occupational activities? In most trade unions, members have an agent who can perform few functions for them; it is no wonder that they are apathetic, and their apathy precludes the possibility of democratic internal politics. Perhaps unions as presently constituted have outworn their purpose in many industries; perhaps democracy could be built explicitly into business organizations—not just as workers' profit-sharing cooperatives, but as organizations whose major policies are subject to review by the workers themselves, organizations with a built-in two-party system.

In any case, many of the voluntary associations in our society which wield great power—trade unions among them—are very little subject to democratic control by their members. . . . This suggests that some basic reorganization is in order, at least in industrial life, if our society is to function well.

JAMES S. COLEMAN

University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois

MR. JACOBS *writes:*

I think Mr. Coleman did not really understand what I wrote, and I don't know that I really understand what he writes. . . .

In my review of *Union Democracy,* I asked if a "democratic" union, completely controlled in all its decision-making by the membership, is *necessarily* more useful, *socially,* than unions which are more authoritatively managed. Mr. Coleman has a ready answer to my question: Yes, he says—and the faults of democratic unions are only the same faults that are found in the larger democratic society, where, for example, even though "a democratic regime is not as efficient as an authoritarian regime can be (as Russia's satellite successes attest)," the democratic regime is nevertheless more desirable, and, therefore, a democratic union is also more desirable.

But I did not suggest that the criterion of efficiency is the key determinant of a union's value; and the abilities of Mr. Khrushchev to hoist the Sputniks into orbit on time "attest" to nothing concerning Russian efficiency, so far as I am concerned.

Efficiency is as often a correlate of people's motivation in a society as it is of the structure of a society. I can cite numerous examples of authoritarian societies, e.g. Spain, which are terribly inefficient by any standards and unbelievably so by those of American democracy.

Mr. Coleman's basic argument seems to be "that a democratic society is composed of a multitude of competing groups which cluster around certain interests and values and that if the 'values of this society' are to be furthered, then it is imperative that the groups themselves be controlled by the interests and values of the members which make them up." I do not recognize, even imperfectly, our own democratic society in the picture Mr. Coleman has conjured up; he has not introduced the essential restraints exercised by the state in establishing the rules by which the groups conflict and compete with each other.

I think Mr. Coleman confuses membership control with membership participation. Further, I am not at all sure that it is "imperative" or even desirable for all interest groups to be controlled—as Mr. Coleman seems to suggest—through the active participation, at a very high level, of all its members. I attend too many meetings as it is now, and if I must also participate in the affairs of *all* the groups which represent my interests . . . I wouldn't have time to read books like *Union Democracy* and write reviews of them. Indeed, if Mr. Coleman practices what he preaches, I wonder how he found time to write his book. . . .

The fact is that the actual world is not now composed of voluntary associations with a two-party system built into them—Mr. Coleman's panacea, it would seem—nor is it likely to be in the future, either in unions or in business. Thus the questions I raised in my review still remain. . . .

Arabs in Israel

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I was intrigued by the editorial comment you published with Walter Schwarz's article, "Israel's Arab Minority," in your January 1958 issue.

You say, "Israel's population of two million includes 200,000 Arabs who are represented in parliament by deputies of their own choice,

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and *in general* have the status of a national minority with rights *equal to those of other citizens*. The *practical* restrictions imposed by the continued state of undeclared war with Israel's Arab neighbors are here discussed . . ." (my emphases).

Whatever may be the "rights equal to other citizens" which you say the Israeli Arabs have "in general," Mr. Schwarz lists quite a few which they do *not* have. For example: "no Jewish settlement is without running water, while of 102 Arab villages, only 20 are supplied with it." "The settlement of 2,000 land claims . . . must be seen in the context of some 30,000 [displaced] Arab citizens of Israel." "Compensation offered to former owners [Arabs] is based on the land values of 1950 (one third today's taxable values)." "Yet they are treated *in some ways* as second class citizens: they are not free to travel; their land can be taken away in what *appears to them* an arbitrary and hypocritical manner . . . there is a good deal of discrimination" (again my emphasis).

You will note that Mr. Schwarz, too, can use a qualifying phrase—"appears to them"! Does it *appear* to Mr. Schwarz that the Israeli government *can* take away land from Arabs in an arbitrary and perchance, also, a hypocritical way? Does it appear thus to the editor of COMMENTARY? And *has* the Israeli government taken such land away in such manner? Mr. Schwarz offers an example that *appears* to fit the bill in the opinion of the kibbutz members at the site of Kfar Baram (one of a hundred Arab villages destroyed by the Israeli army during peacetime), who he reports were "indignant." But let's qualify this; they are Mapamites. Does Mr. Schwarz or the editor know of any other examples? If not, I refer them to Mr. Don Peretz.

The editor speaks of "practical" restrictions. In what sense "practical"? Does he mean that they work? Or should we infer that the restrictions are necessary for "practical" reasons—as opposed to an "ideal" of no restrictions? But Mr. Schwarz refers to "the contrasting liberal attitude" (presumably of some Israelis, too) that "the Arabs are, after all, Israeli citizens who were in the country before the Jews and who chose to 'give Israel a chance' and indeed like most people anywhere are law-abiding citizens. . . ." It would probably be just as difficult to prove that the restrictions were successful in a practical sense, as to prove the contention that the restrictions have maintained and/or created resentments without which restrictions might be unnecessary. In any event, the long series of incidents cast doubt on their practicality, while "liberals" doubt their necessity. And the editor?

I will not cite some other items which should give your conscience pause. We all know about the Arab deputies in the Knesset—but you say that these deputies are the "choice" of the 200,000 Arabs and Mr. Schwarz says that in fact out of 102 Arab villages in Israel only 14 have elected councils. I do not know if the Arab deputies truly represent their 200,000 fellow minorityites, but I suspect your formulation as being euphemistic, and intended to prove your partisanship to Israel.

Insofar as Mr. Schwarz's article sheds light on a most serious situation, and more information and light are needed, I congratulate you for your moral heroism in publishing it.

ALFRED RUSSEL

Evanston, Illinois

[The editorial note to which Mr. Russel takes exception was intended to sketch in the background against which the problem raised by Mr. Schwarz's article is currently being debated in Israel.—ED.]

Gobineau

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Melvin Richter's article on the Tocqueville-Gobineau correspondence (February) was first-class. . . . I should like to add that Gobineau was, in many ways, a superb French stylist, admired by Albert Sorel, Ernest Renan, Léon Bloy, Marcel Proust. Some of his novels even appeared in American editions during the 1920's. Moreover the friendship between Tocqueville and Gobineau, despite their differences, remained closer throughout than was perhaps suggested by Mr. Richter.

As Mr. Richter wrote, the Tocqueville-Gobineau correspondence has not been translated into English. Your readers may be interested to know that all the hitherto available letters are now translated, and will be issued by Doubleday Anchor Books, in a Tocqueville volume introduced and edited by this writer, in a few months from now.

J. A. LUKACS

Phoenixville, Pa.

Jingle

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In your February number Gordon A. Craig, in his review of Mr. Kissinger's and Mr. Osgood's books, credits "When in danger/When in doubt,/Run in circles,/Scream and shout," to an unsung genius in the Pacific theater during World War II.

The professor is wrong. . . . I first heard the jingle myself in the 20's from the carpenter of

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a Finnish bark, who was deriding a panicky second mate. The carpenter . . . told me (I was young and inquisitive then) that he might have first heard the rhyme in the Royal Navy in the 1880's. I've a hunch it is at least several hundred years old and of general maritime usage. If the nearest good library weren't three thousand miles away I'd look into it.

MATHEW WALKER

S/S Hai Choy
San Pedro, California

The Sephardic Community

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Mr. Leonard Plotnik's article on the "Sephardim of New Lots," in your January number, is disturbing reading—he places the Sephardim in a much too unfavorable light. No doubt he himself did not receive the right information in response to his inquiries, hence the many inaccuracies. . . .

He stresses too strongly the "isolationism" of the Sephardim of New Lots. He forgets to look at the other side of the picture, and ignores some important facts which brought about circumstances beyond their control that tended to keep them separate. Nor does he consistently restrict himself to the particular group of Sephardim (those of New Lots) which he is supposedly describing: he often goes into generalizations about *the* Sephardim, but his statements apply only to the New Lots group.

The settlement of the Sephardim followed the same general pattern as that of the Ashkenazim and, for that matter, the pattern of any immigrant group in the United States. In addition, the Sephardim were a minority within a minority. The first Sephardi settlers, from the Balkans, arriving about 1900, also settled on the Lower East Side, in Broome, Allen, Rivington Streets, etc., where their Ashkenazi brethren were already duly established. But there was little contact and no absorption, because of the language barrier. These Sephardim spoke mostly Ladino, Greek, or Arabic. They did not understand Yiddish. . . .

In the existing Ashkenazi synagogues they found a pronunciation strange to their ears, a service unfamiliar to them, and if there were any sermons in those days, they were not understood. So they were *driven* into isolation. They established their own synagogues which they called "Sephardic," not from a feeling of pride or superiority, but to indicate to any future arrivals that here the Sephardi *minhag* was followed. . . .

The synagogues were their rallying points (just as with the Ashkenazim). They were well attended (*not* "rarely used") and there were many of them, as the writer admits. The pattern was the same as that of the *Landsmannschaften* of the Ashkenazim: each group of people from one locality formed a synagogue of their own, and also societies for benevolent and burial purposes. . . .

The Ashkenazim, especially the social workers of HIAS, etc., found it, in their turn, difficult to deal with the Sephardim, and they often did not accept them as Jews because "they could not speak Yiddish." . . .

Contrary to Mr. Plotnik's statement that there were "no Sephardi intellectuals to serve as mediators," two groups did yeoman work: first, the leaders of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue headed by Dr. David De Sola Pool and assisted by men and women in the congregation who were able to speak Spanish; and second, the intellectuals among the immigrants, for they were *not* all illiterate. Some had had an excellent education in the schools of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, both men and women. They had *not* sunk to the level of the "ignorant labor classes in Turkey." There were good schools and prominent rabbis, especially in Constantinople (Istanbul). Pupils of the Alliance organized the Oriental Hebrew Educational Association.

These Sephardim could then not take full advantage of the assistance offered by the existing agencies, which were geared to the Ashkenazi, Yiddish-speaking immigrants. To a great extent, they had to help themselves. Already in 1912 different groups "united" in a Federation of Oriental Jews in America, and they formed their own Relief Society in 1913. In 1910 they had started their own newspaper, a weekly in Ladino. They also had their own literary and dramatic societies, where plays were presented in Ladino. I myself saw an interesting performance of Racine's *Athalie* shortly before the Second World War.

A good many Sephardim had settled in Harlem, between 110th and 125th Streets, and this number grew steadily. After the First World War a serious attempt was made to create a Center in Harlem, and soon there was a beehive of activities in a Sephardic Center, including a large school, all directed by Sephardim. However, circumstances beyond their control called a stop to this development when the mass movement of Negroes to Harlem began, and when the capable (Sephardi) director of the Center died a sudden death. The Center closed and the Sephardim dispersed. It was then that many moved to the Bronx. Again in the Bronx a "United" Synagogue was established when a number of people hailing from different localities built the Sephardic Jewish Center of the Bronx in 1948.

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Due credit should be given to Rabbi Nissim Ovadia, who was the real founder of the Central Sephardic Jewish Community of America. Rabbi Ovadia arrived in New York at the beginning of the Second World War. He had to flee from Paris, where he had an important Sephardi congregation. He united eighteen different Sephardi groups and their leaders into one Community. This organization was developing well under his capable and accepted leadership up to the time of his death in 1942. In 1943 Dr. Isaac Alcalay was chosen spiritual head of the Community. The Community has a number of successes to its credit, especially the founding of a beautiful Sephardic Home for the Aged in Coney Island. . . .

It is not my intention to correct all the inaccuracies in Mr. Plotnik's article. But I cannot allow to pass unchallenged his statement that the music in the Sephardi service originated in Spanish hymns, or is of Turkish origin. The Sephardim have preserved a number of Spanish ballads and secular songs, and occasionally such a melody has crept into the synagogue (just as *Mo-oz Tsur* among the Ashkenazim), but this happened before 1492, in Spain, and was severely criticized by the rabbis of the time. Most of the Sephardi melodies have a long Jewish tradition. . . .

(Rabbi) David A. Jessurun Cardozo
Mount Holly, N. J.

Mr. Plotnik *writes:*

It is apparent from David Politi's letter, in last month's issue ("Letters from Readers," March), that members of the Central Sephardic Jewish Community are disturbed by my article and have misinterpreted my motive in writing it. It was not written to censure or praise the community of New Lots, nor to amuse the readers of Commentary with a piece of exotica.

When I first came to New Lots, six years ago, eager to mobilize the Sephardic community for the support of Israel, I found it fraught with clannish dissension and insulated from the main stream of American Jewish life. I arrived well informed by Sephardic leaders about the obstacles I should have to face. In the course of these six years I have witnessed a development in the Sephardic community that, I venture to say, rivals that of any other Jewish community in New York. During the past five years the sisterhood of the United Sephardim has not only been able to overcome traditional obstacles in obtaining a voice in community affairs, but has become one of the most vigorous adjuncts in the National Jewish Women's League and has injected a youthful enthusiasm into the United Synagogue movement. Within this same period I also saw the Sephardic Victory Club develop from a coffeehouse type of club into a progressive men's social and center for communal participation in the philanthropic campaigns of the greater Jewish community. I have already discussed the phenomenon of the United Sephardim of Brooklyn in my original article. Certainly my gratification over these achievements would not predispose me to cynical criticism of the community.

The points of information in my article with which Mr. Politi disagrees are easily verified by historic reference and personal observation. Coffeehouses, cut from Old World patterns, still exist in Brooklyn as well as along Allen Street on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. However, I did not insinuate that these former centers of the community retained their initial importance to this day.

Clannish feuds between sectional societies, such as the Castoralis and Monastirlis, etc., still exist, although they are gradually disappearing. The recent attempt in the New Lots community to bring both of these bodies under one religious head is encouraging.

Despite the growing trend to subscribe to the "packaged" services offered by funeral establishments, many Sephardim continue to honor orthodox burial traditions. Cemetery directors have also recently imposed restrictions against catering on the grounds, but orthodox Sephardim and Ashkenazim alike continue to serve food at the conclusion of services.

I am not quibbling about what constitutes a *cheder* type of Hebrew school in contrast to Talmud Torahs duly recognized by the J.E.C. What was implied in my article was the vast difference in educational standards between the present Talmud Torah and the Hebrew school of the past.

As for the Turkish-Moslem influences in Sephardic services, this information was originally brought to my attention by the officers of the synagogue and elucidated for me by a scholarly Sephardic cantor who has extensive archives on modal forms and their origins. In this connection, let me quote a passage from the *Jewish Encyclopedia* (Vol. VI, p. 290): ". . . It is these chants and in rather later synagogal forms such as the Kerabot, based on similar material, that the musical figuration not infrequently presents points of contact, on the one hand, with the Gregorian music of Catholic tradition . . . or, on the other hand, with the traditional intonations of the Moslems. . . ."

Abraham Galanté, professor at the University of Istanbul and Sephardic historian, in his papers *Documents officiels turcs concernant les*

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Juifs de Turquie and *Contributions à l'histoire des Juifs de Turquie* discusses the great influence of the Jews on Turkish life as scholars, professionals, and officials in the Ottoman Empire. He also mentions the fact that Jewish officials were guests at Moslem services just as Jews and Christians visit each others' places of worship in this country.

In regard to the decadence of Sephardic cultural life after the 16th century, I refer Mr. Politi to Professor Mair Jose Bernadete's *Hispanic Culture and Character of the Sephardic Jews:* "Thereafter the stages of loss, degradation and decay took place, processes of depletion set in, and there were no counter movements to reinvigorate the disintegrating organism." The exceptions of Joseph Caro, Rabbi Habib, and Joseph Bira, all prominent theologians and scholars, do not alter the general picture which Graetz, Dubnow, and Roth also paint.

Mr. Politi challenges my data on the state of affairs among the early Sephardic immigrants to America; these data come from records in the possession of the Central Sephardic Jewish Community.

As for the status of the Sephardic rabbinate and seminaries in modern times, I refer Mr. Politi to an official statement by Rabbi Hayim Nahum, former Chief Rabbi of Turkey and for many years spiritual leader of the Sephardic community in Cairo. Rabbi Nahum not only deplores the absence of seminaries but the lack of qualified rabbis as well: ". . . *comme aussi les aspirants du Rabbinat se font des plus rares. Les études juives qui remissaient un grand nombres d'adeptes du XIX^e siècle sont aujourd'hui délaisées et l'intérêt pour notre patrimoine religieux et spirituel risque de disparaître dans quelques années. . . .*" I quote Rabbi Nahum with all due respect to the eminent Dr. Isaac Alcalay and other Sephardic rabbis throughout the country, including, of course, the noted American scholar, Dr. David De Sola Pool.

I must also remind Mr. Politi that since the first wave of "mass" Sephardic immigration to this country from the Ottoman Empire began about fifty years ago two adult generations of American-born Sephardim have come into being. Certainly the files of the Central Sephardic Jewish Community can verify this, too.

Mr. Politi further accuses me of crediting HIAS with the sole responsibility for bringing the Sephardic immigrants to this country at the turn of the century. I merely stated that: ". . . The poorer laborers, who could not pay for their own passage, were brought to the United States under the auspices of shipping agencies and philanthropic organizations *like* HIAS" (my present emphasis).

Referring to the use of "Yudak" and other such terms by Sephardim for Ashkenazic Jews, Mr. Politi insists that they are completely outmoded or "quite unknown." Again I must disagree with him. They must still be in use since I learned them on the streets of New Lots.

I could continue at length to show that Mr. Politi's case against my article is based on misunderstanding. In writing objectively about the Sephardic community, I believe that I have served the cause of Jewish unity better than if I had chosen to idealize the reality.

In answer to Rabbi Cardozo, I would simply say that my article was written to prove that being a minority group was *not* the sole cause of the dilemma of the Sephardic community in American Jewish life. This dilemma was a result of the conflict between clans who persisted in their proud sectionalism until quite recently. Only in New Lots, through the United Sephardim movement of the younger generation, has progress been made toward mobilizing the community into a constructive force in Jewish life.

As to the Harlem group, it may be said that the original settlement of Monastirlis Jews in Rochester, N. Y., or the settlement of Sephardim in Cincinnati, must have carried far more importance for New Lots, which counts among its prominent members former residents of these two cities.

Rabbi Cardozo challenges the Turkish origin of the music in the Sephardic services. I can refer him to S. Duran's *Magen Abot,* S. Consolo's *Libro dei Conti d'Israele* (Florence, 1892), A. Z. Idelsohn's *Jewish Music,* and the article on Jewish music in the *Jewish Encyclopedia.* One of several examples given in these works is the prayer *"Mar li Mar Mar Mar,"* which comes from the Turkish *"Krodas Yar Yar Yar."* The Turkish word *dost* ("friend") ending each line in the modal is translated into the Hebrew *dodi.* The *achot Ketanah* ("little sister"), which was composed on the lines of the popular Levantine song "The Little Maid," is another example.

Transliteration

To the Editor of Commentary:

The transliteration from the Hebrew in my review last month of Isaac F. Baer's book was the editors', not mine.

Milton Himmelfarb

New York City

Correction

Melvin Richter, whose article "A Debate on Race" appeared in the February issue, is a member of the Department of Political Science at Hunter College, New York City.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Exile and Israel

THE AMERICAN JEW: A ZIONIST ANALYSIS. By BEN HALPERN. Theodor Herzl Foundation. 174 pp. $2.00.

Reviewed by LUCY S. DAWIDOWICZ

BEN HALPERN'S book is an exciting exception to the dreary journalistic output about American Jews and Israel. Halpern has done several things in this lengthy essay: he has examined the situation of American Jews; he has analyzed various formulas or ideologies bearing on the future of American Jewish life (Reform, cultural pluralism, Reconstructionism); and he has set forth his own views and feelings about a viable Jewish cultural life in America. Despite the basic disagreements I have with Halpern's conclusions, I find his book honest and acute throughout. But he is far more cogent as an observer of American Jews than as an advocate of secular Zionism. The introductory chapter "America Is Different" is, I think, the best in the book, with its penetrating discussion of the differences between the Jewish situation in America and in pre-war Europe, and its analysis of the attenuation of Jewish culture in America. But I was dissatisfied with Halpern's explanation of why he is—or, to be exact, why, so many years after Israel's establishment, he has remained—a Zionist in America.

Central to Halpern's Zionism is the concept of Exile. To him it is "the *inalienably* Jewish idea, the most intimate creation of the Jewish people, the symbol in which our whole historic experience is sublimated and summed up." This momentary illumination becomes dissipated, for me at least, by Halpern's somewhat rambling debate over the meaning of Exile with the founders of Reform Judaism, with Mordecai M. Kaplan, and with the "neo-Zionists," all of whom have in one way or another rejected the idea that Jews in America are in Exile.

Halpern insists on defining Exile as "essentially a religious idea," "a disordered condition of the Universe as a whole, which is epitomized in the fact and symbol that the Jewish people live outside their own proper place, the land of Israel." He does not, however, attribute such cosmic importance to the subsidiary but sustaining concepts of Exile: Mission, Chosenness, and Redemption. He deals with the concept of Mission as if it were an invention by Reform Judaism to evade the Exile, hinting ironically that perhaps 19th-century Reform discovered Isaiah 49:6 (*"I will also give thee for a light of the nations, that My salvation may be unto the end of the earth"*). Though Halpern insists on an exalted metaphysical view of Exile, he considers Mission sociologically, as an outlook on Jewish life evolved by a particular group of Jews in a particular time. His mystique of Exile grows, I think, out of his Zionism, rather than the other way round. It arises from his desire to make of Zionism something more than a late 19th-century political movement: he wants to link it up with an ancient tradition of Jewish thought.

AS A non-Zionist and a secularist, I cannot see Exile as anything but the condition of the Jews in the world, the way Jews themselves view the possibility of their survival among Gentiles. All Jews live with some feeling of Exile, an anxiety about their place in the Gentile world. But mere awareness of Exile does not necessarily give meaning to one's Jewishness. It is rather in the challenge to Exile, the way in which the Jew chooses to interpret his role in Gentile society, that makes his life meaningful as a Jew in dispersion. In the past Jews offered alternate challenges to Exile: Redemption and Mission. The desire for Redemption in the immediate present arose when the conditions of Exile became insupportable. These were the tragic Messianic periods. The idea that Redemption would come in the trans-historical future, while Jews fulfilled their Mission in the present, governed periods when the conditions of Exile were tolerable.

In trying to justify classical Zionism as the heir of an authentic Jewish tradition of Exile,

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as against what he considers the spurious interpretation of Reform, Halpern indulges in word-play. He says that Reform was based on a "denial" of Exile, while Zionism grew out of a "rejection" of Exile. I find this distinction artificial. The men who shaped Reform Judaism and classical Zionism assessed the condition of Exile according to their own lights. Reform believed that Jews could survive in a Gentile society; whatever they may have said about the meaning of Exile, they accepted it as a Jewish tradition. Their concept of Mission was developed to insure the continuity of *Judaism* in a modern world, since they were already assured that *the Jews* would survive in this world. But Theodor Herzl thought that the Jews could survive physically only in their own society. Herzlian Zionism was concerned primarily with improving the political and economic status of Jews; the survival of the Jewish people was secondary.

The deeper difference between Reform and classical Zionism is seen in their respective attitudes toward the concept of the Jews as the Chosen People. Whether we interpret this idea theologically, historically, or sociologically, it still remains one means of understanding Exile. Reform shaped the idea of the Chosen People into a universalistic mission. Classical Zionism refused to admit that the Jews differed as a people from other peoples except insofar as they had been affected by the accidents of history.

Ahad Ha-am was the first and for many long years the only Zionist to argue that a Jewish state was necessary, less for Jews as individuals, than to promote the continuity of the Jewish people, to serve as a spiritual center to insure the survival of Jewish culture in the Diaspora. Unlike the Herzlians and the later Labor Zionists, Ahad Ha-am accepted dispersion and mission as essential to the Jewish people. He looked upon a Jewish state basically as a means of fortifying the Jewish people in dispersion against the inroads of assimilation.

It is actually to Ahad Ha-am's "national will to live" that Halpern addresses himself when he speaks of the individual Jew's awareness of Exile. In American Jews he has found this will to live enfeebled by both the blunted sense of Exile (that is, the meaninglessness of being Jewish) and the conditions prevailing in America that militate against development of an integral Jewish culture. Halpern has obviously found the American Jewish experience conclusive: Jews cannot survive as a people and develop an authentic culture unless they are forced into effective separation or unless they live in a Jewish state.

Though I find myself largely agreeing with Halpern's appraisal of American Jewish life, though the outlook for a living Jewish culture in America is dim, I am not yet prepared to accept Halpern's conclusion. Perhaps this is simply because I am not a Zionist. I am unwilling to admit that the price of security for Jews as human beings is the loss of Jewish group life and culture. I want to continue to hope that the integration of Jews in Gentile society does not necessarily mean the disintegration of Jewish culture and tradition. True, the kind of Jewish culture that may evolve will differ from the culture that I have known and differ from Halpern's, but it may suit America and keep American Jews within the mainstream of Jewish tradition.

This is my hope, for I do not share Halpern's implied belief in Israel's ability, at least as of today, to provide American Jews with a Jewish culture they can practice even as a cult.

HALPERN has said that Zionism "rejected" Exile. But it rejected also the Jew in Exile, his culture and his ethos. Hatred of the Diaspora turned into contempt for the Jew in Exile and his way of life. The culture now developing in Israel has its roots in this denigration of the Diaspora Jew and his values. In this sense, Zionism—like assimilation—has cut a deep wound into the continuity of Jewish tradition.

In his eloquent address at the Ideological Conference in Jersualem last summer, the Yiddish poet H. Leivick reminded the Israelis that the basis of the life of every Jew both in Israel and outside was not negation but affirmation, that the essence of Jewish existence was to be found in continuity. " 'In the beginning' was said only once: when God created the world. Since then everything has been in process of flux." He went on to say that no person "could create an aye from a nay," that love could not be attained by intoxication with hate.

Many Israelis, at least in their ideological thinking, have discarded the traditional Jewish values of the Diaspora, swept away as worthless shards the two thousand years of accumulated experience in Jewish survival. The Jew we have known has been replaced by the image of the "new Jew," the tough, bronzed, muscular Israeli, standing fast at his post, defending his

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farm with a musket, reclaiming his land from the wilderness. This Israeli frontiersman is the sabra we have all met at one time or another, contemptuous of the Jew outside Israel, scornful and ignorant of Jewish tradition and history from the Talmud to the Nazi death camp. The sabra may be at home in his own land (certainly he is provincial and chauvinistic), but he is alien to and alienated from the sense that all Jews belong to one people.

Rooted physically in his land, the sabra has remained emotionally and intellectually rootless. The arrival in Israel of hundreds of thousands of Jews who came, not because they wanted to end the Exile for themselves but because they needed a place to live, has sharpened the realization among Israeli leaders that a national tradition cannot develop from negation or nothingness. Jewish culture did not, after all, begin in 1948 with the establishment of Israel, nor even in 1897 with the founding of the Zionist Organization. In casting about for a Jewish tradition, the sabra has hit upon the cult of the Bible. When David Ben Gurion wrote to Nathan Rotenstreich that "the distant past is closer to us than the recent past of the last two thousand years," he was speaking for the sabra rather than for himself.* For in his article that started the debate, Ben Gurion admitted that the sabras "need to understand the ties that bind them to Diaspora Jewry and to realize the unity of the Jewish people at all times and in all places." Ben Gurion argued that the "tales of the Patriarchs four thousand years ago," "the wars of Joshua Bin-Nun" and "the achievements of Uzziah King of Judah and Jereboam II, King of Israel," are closer to the sabras than the speeches of Zionist congresses. But obviously these are not the only milestones in the Jewish past.

When the present Israeli government formulated its basic principles in 1955, it stressed the need for "Jewish consciousness" in the Israeli educational system, in order that "Israel's youth be steeped in the past of the Jewish people and in its historic heritage; and that its moral affiliation with world Jewry be strengthened through greater realization of the common destiny and historic continuity which binds Jews all over the world and throughout the generations." Recently the inability of the sabras to communicate adequately with Diaspora Jews has been discussed in the Israeli press; it has been the object of sociological and anthropological studies. As a result a new program of studies called "Jewish-Israel Consciousness" is being introduced in the Israeli schools. Changes have been made in the teaching of religion, folkways, and history "with a view to deepening the recognition of the continuity of the Jewish people." The upper two grades of elementary school are to be taught a new subject, "Knowledge of the People," dealing with the life of Jews in the Diaspora. (There is, of course, still the question of how these subjects will be taught and the teachers' attitudes toward the subject matter.)

THE sabra ethos, the myth of the Israeli as rugged frontiersman, has had a paradoxical effect on American Jews. On the one hand, it has deepened the differences between Israelis and those American Jews who have tried to adjust East European Jewish values to America. But, on the other, it has made the Israeli attractive to young American Jews, particularly those who do not even know the Hebrew alphabet. These young Americans have been fired with pride by the Jewish state, though they have no desire to settle there and no wish to relate themselves to its culture. It is their very Americanism that brings them into rapport with Israel. The further the young American Jew wanders from Jewish tradition, the more he absorbs the American ethos, the closer he comes to the sabra, the "new Jew." The "cowboy" and "frontiersman" have supplanted the People of the Book.

This fraternal attitude of the young American Jew toward Israel is quite different from the fierce pride that first-generation American Jews take in the state, in its "Jewish" army and "Jewish" street cleaners. Theirs is indeed a cult of the state which developed, as I have suggested elsewhere, in great part from their guilt over their own safety during the Nazi holocaust. The cult of the state has become their way of identifying with the Jewish people. But their children and grandchildren feel friendly toward Israel because its style is so American.

The very tenuous thread that binds young American Jews to the Israeli sabras is not at all what held Jews together in the past. Their consensus, if that is the right word for so vague a relationship, does not derive from any Jewish tradition, but rather from a gradual, at times

*The lengthy correspondence between Ben Gurion and Rotenstreich was published in English in *Forum for the Problems of Zionism, World Jewry and the State of Israel*, III, August 1957.

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imperceptible, abandonment of tradition in the case of the American, and, for the sabras, from an outright denial and rejection of that tradition. Perhaps we should welcome this convergence, even if it has its roots in a stunted Jewish perception. For in a period when Jews are becoming divided into divergent groups, any force is welcome that will help keep alive our awareness that we are one people.

Halpern believes that the secularist Zionist "is committed to the effort to preserve Jewish culture in the Diaspora on a level that will maintain an adequate national consensus in the continuing Ingathering." I confess I do not clearly understand what Halpern means. I am certain he does not mean the preservation of Jewish culture as most Zionists conceive it: so many Hebrew words a week or month as a tool to advance Israel tourism, or teaching American children Israel's geography and the record of the Youth Aliyah. Elsewhere in his book he criticizes American Zionists for wanting the Israelis to be more Jewish and points to the difficulties of "sharing a culture rooted in another land and developing in accordance with foreign conditions."

This problem is the heart of our dilemma. In the past, fortified by religious observance, Jewish culture was able to preserve its supranational character, while at the same time adapting itself to the conditions of life in different countries and different periods. The fear today is that the condition of Israel's statehood will so circumscribe its culture that no consensus will be possible with Jews outside Israel. If we criticize American Jews for trying to naturalize Jewish culture in the United States, we must make the same criticism of the Israelis.

If Jews are to remain one people (a desire that is far from being exclusively Zionist), the responsibility rests as much on the Israelis as on American Jews. *The state was never intended as an end in itself.* The Zionist founders believed that most Jews would come to live in the state and those remaining outside would eventually be lost to the Jewish people by assimilation. Today everyone recognizes that most Jews will continue to live outside Israel, at least in the foreseeable future. We must therefore accept our interdependence. A "national consensus" cannot be achieved by a naturalized American Jewish culture or an insular Israeli one. The two will have to find common elements from the two-thousand-year-old Diaspora culture.

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Graves on War

GOODBYE TO ALL THAT. By ROBERT GRAVES. Anchor Books (paperback). 320 pp. $.95.

Reviewed by DAN JACOBSON

THERE are many reasons why one should read, or reread, *Goodbye to All That*. On the simplest level the book is as informative and as continuously interesting as a good novel, whether it deals with the style of life of a cultivated literary family at the beginning of this century, or life in a public school before the First World War, or with Oxford just after the war; there is a curiously and disturbingly relevant chapter on Egypt as the author saw it when he served as a lecturer in English at the newly established university in Cairo. It can also be read as a document of the life of a poet whose influence on other poets, though never sensational, has been growing steadily, and some of whose poems are as likely to be read in fifty or a hundred years' time as any others the reader can think of. But, beyond these, there are reasons for reading *Goodbye to All That* which make its republication today particularly apposite, particularly an occasion for notice.

The book is quite justly most famous for its description of the fighting in the trenches of the First World War. If we think about such things at all today, we are so absorbed in our own horrors of war and concentration camps and the threat of even more fantastic wars to come that we forget what went before, what led up to the kind of world in which we live. But the trenches of the First World War are of our time: it is from them that our time has grown, with its own anonymous and random slaughters, its own hysterias, its own precarious armistices. Robert Graves spares us none of the horrors of his war: the horrors of sight and smell and pain, and over and above the others, the horror of the apparently utter futility and meaninglessness of the suffering that the men in the trenches went through. In the trenches, as Graves describes them, there were no politics, not even in the way of hatred of the Germans (that was reserved for the French, and for those safe at home); there was no religion; there was no patriotism of a recognizable kind. There was only waste and disorder and death, in a nightmare that has its climax in the book at the description of a shambles of a "dud show"—an offensive that ends in total disaster, and includes the indiscriminate gassing, shelling, and machine-gunning of Graves's regiment and several others by both British and German guns and gas companies.

BEING what it is, telling the story that it does, *Goodbye to All That* is necessarily a book of anger and violent protest—and it is this not the less effectively for the control which the author uses over any expressions of anger or protest. Indeed, his control over his own feelings—and those of the reader—is so tight that the reader feels the outburst as a positive relief, when the news of the Armistice sends the author "walking alone along the dyke above the marshes of Rhuddlan (an ancient battlefield, the Flodden of Wales) cursing and sobbing and thinking of the dead." But the reader will notice that even here he is forbidden to indulge in his sense of relief: even here he is reminded of other battlefields and other wars than the one just ended.

This is not the only place in the book in which indulgence of any kind is forbidden to the reader. The absence of overt comment of a moralizing kind communicates to the reader a particular tension which is not the result of a mere literary device, but arises from the complexity and subtlety of the attitude of the author toward his material. The war—as Robert Graves describes it—is unrelievedly futile and terrible; but the futility and the terror are never for a moment offered as an excuse for any failure of will or nerve on the part of the people with whom the author has to deal, or on the part of the author himself. When, on his first tour of the trenches, a group of men fail to salute him, and Graves writes, "I thought this was a convention of the trenches. . . . But I was wrong; it was just slackness," we have here a very small example of the severity of tone which runs right through the book, and that finds its expression elsewhere in the author's intense pride in the traditions of his regiment, in his concern that the regimental record should be upheld, in his distaste for inefficiency, cowardice, or for that matter, stay-at-homes of almost any kind. The severity never becomes cold, never lacks compassion: on the contrary, by a feat of writing almost as extraordinary as it must once have been of mind and will, courage and order and the capacity for disciplined self-sacrifice become the standards by which it is possible for the reader to judge the foulness of the war, as

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they were once the standards by which it was possible for the author to go open-eyed through the war and yet retain his sanity. His horror and his protest are unremitting; but they have their force because of the equally unremitting respect—indeed, the devotion—of the author to the stoic, soldierly virtues.

Goodbye to All That was written when the author was thirty-three, and was first published about as many years after the First World War as we are today distant from the Second. It seems to be the fashionable belief in England today that it is an easy matter for a writer to be angry and full of protest. The republication of *Goodbye to All That* after almost thirty years serves to remind us that true anger and true protest are as rare to find as they are desperately hard for an author to achieve. And as with figures so violently dissimilar in aims and level of achievement as Orwell or Forster, what may look at first like an eccentricity in Graves's approach is in fact what is most centrally, knottily, unyieldingly English in his work. It is something reassuring to encounter again, after one has heard the kind of voices that claim to speak for England now.

"Putzi"

UNHEARD WITNESS. By ERNST HANFSTAENGL. Lippincott. 317 pp. $4.95.

Reviewed by R. H. S. CROSSMAN

"PUTZI'S" memories of life with Hitler—told to a dictaphone and then "orchestrated" by Brian Connell—is a jewel of a book: costume jewelry, of course, but, thanks to Mr. Connell's ghostly craftsmanship, it may well have enduring value as a historical oddity. For here is a deliciously revealing self-portrait of the most ridiculous of all the Führer's hangers-on. Ernst Hanfstaengl—he is still alive and back in his old Munich villa—is a well-born Bavarian, with an American mother and a pre-1914 Harvard education. He lived out World War I in the United States and only returned to his native country in 1921, just in time to see the beginnings of National Socialism. On the first occasion on which he heard Hitler speak, he fell under his spell; and, thanks to the value of his American dollars during the German inflation, he was able to finance the Nazi party at a critical time and even to help buy the printing presses of the *Völkischer Beobachter* by the loan of a thousand greenbacks.

"Putzi's" enthusiasm for the Führer waxed and waned with his success and failure. When Hitler's career seemed to have been finished by the fiasco of the beer-hall *Putsch* in November 1923, Hanfstaengl turned his attention to the prosperous family business of art reproductions. But the Nazi election success of 1930 revived his faith and he eagerly accepted the Führer's proposal that he should take charge of relations with the foreign press, a post he held until he took one of Goering's practical jokes seriously, believed that he was really due to be parachuted behind the Republican lines in Spain, and fled for his life. After ten years spent mostly in British and Canadian detention centers, he returned to Munich in 1946. *Unheard Witness* is his attempt to record his recollections and assessments of the Nazi leadership, and also to rehabilitate himself in the eyes of the Western world.

Brian Connell has done a superb job, recording, editing, and actually writing this "autobiography," and its very considerable literary qualities are entirely due to him. "Putzi" does not exaggerate when he claims

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that, in the two critical periods of Hitler's life—the twelve months leading up to the *Putsch* of November 8, 1923, and the two years following the seizure of power in March 1933—he belonged to the Führer's most intimate entourage and was with him every day. What endeared this wealthy, silly Anglo-American *flaneur* to Hitler was the fact that he is an amusing drawing-room mimic, who can play Wagner on the piano with all the embellishments of Liszt. In his dual role as court jester and court musician to a neurotic tyrant, who could only relax under the influence of *Tristan* or the *Meistersinger*, "Putzi" had a unique opportunity to study Hitler, and I can well understand Mr. Connell's belief that these memoirs would prove a first-rate historical scoop. What I cannot understand is that, when he had finished the job, his enthusiasm remained unabated:

"As a man of true artistic temperament, Hanfstaengl had a psychological insight into Hitler's personal character and repressions not remotely matched by anyone in constant contact with him during the formative years they were together. To the incomplete if extensive patchwork of Hitlerian biography and Nazi history he brings for the first time a conclusive picture of Hitler, the man in the making. He was able to evaluate as an intelligent intimate the neuroses which determined Hitler's megalomania. There is no record like it because no other man is equipped to tell the story."

I hate to say so, but every sentence in this critique is false or grossly misleading. Hanfstaengl reveals no "psychological insight" into Hitler's character; he provides a picture which can in no sense be called "conclusive"; and he signally fails to show himself "equipped to tell the story." As for his evaluation of the Führer, it consists of a series of psychological clichés, based on second- and usually third-hand rumors about Hitler's sex life. We are given at least half a dozen descriptions of affairs with beautiful girls, which came to nothing owing to Hitler's impotence, and we get yet another (third-hand) version—this time with pornographic embellishments—of the Führer's affair with his niece, Geli Raubal.

The only genuinely new material in this book are the trivialities and details—the Führer's technique of speech-making, his reactions to the suggestion that he should have dancing lessons, his habit of heavy tipping, and his refusal ever to make notes. Throughout the book, moreover, we see new evidence of his skill at playing off the members of the entourage by encouraging them all to be actively disloyal to each other and only loyal to himself. "Putzi," for example, persuaded himself that his role in life was to counteract the evil influence of Rosenberg, and Rosenberg no doubt was equally convinced that he was there to counteract "Putzi." Each of them felt that whenever he got the ear of the Führer things were going well, and each used his rare opportunities of private talk with Hitler to vilify the others. But we knew most of this before *Unheard Witness* was published.

If Hanfstaengl's evidence about Hitler is either stale or trivial, his conclusions are not much better: "He was always faced by the inner knowledge that he could not have normal relations with a woman and was jealous of those who could and of those women who preferred normal men. . . . His overcompensation for an inferiority complex was the driving force of his lust for power. Uneasily aware that he was incapable of perpetuating himself as a father, he developed a substitute-obsession to make his name known—and feared—throughout the ages, whatever monstrous deeds such a mania involved."

The trouble about all such psychological explanations is that they fail to explain what differentiates the one sexual failure in a thousand who happens to make a stir from the 999 who are sexual failures and nothing more. But, if Hanfstaengl has so little of enduring value to tell us about Hitler, why is his book of en-

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during value? The answer is that—largely thanks to Mr. Connell's skill—the picture of "Putzi" himself is as brilliant and precise as that of Hitler is flat. At the end of *Unheard Witness* we feel that we really have been sitting with "Putzi" as he strums at the piano and pours out his monologue. Here is a real-life caricature of the upper-class German who was very largely responsible for the betrayal of his country to the Nazi gangsters. Although he backed Hitler only in his periods of success and remained with him for years after the massacre of June 30, 1934, Hanfstaengl has persuaded himself that his motives were disinterested and that, if he erred, it was only through over-optimism. Indeed, we are asked to feel indignant that he was interned after he had refused in 1940 to back what he then felt was the losing side. The self-deception of which he shows himself capable is more articulate but no more extreme than that of the average upper-class German of his generation.

Where "Putzi" does excel is in his snobbery and vanity, which are excessive even for a Bavarian aristocrat. It is amusing to hear him describe Professor Haushofer and Josef Goebbels as "ignorant fanatics" and later as "nobodies in their shirtsleeves playing at being Metternichs."

"I do not want to be malicious" (he observes on another page) "but after all these people came from nowhere and the only luxurious furnishings they saw were in the hotels in which they stayed, so they came to accept the early Pullman style as the height of breeding and sophistication."

The Junkers, of course, are Hanfstaengl's *beau idéal*. Among the photographs in this book (more than half are of "Putzi" himself), the nicest shows him marching alongside Hindenburg at the Tannenberg celebrations, a scene he describes as follows: "The old gentleman was very civil to me and talked in his deep bass voice about a cousin of mine of the same name whom he had known in Potsdam as an officer of the Guards Grenadier regiment. We stood tracing back genealogies for several minutes, to the utter fury and jealousy of Hitler's entourage."

And here, finally, is a description of tea with Hitler in the Kaiserhof: "I cannot say that the public was of the best class . . . You did not see any of the women, often of quite good family, who had identified themselves, from idealistic motives, with the Hitler movement during the last couple of years before it came to power. The Kaiserhof parade was made up of that fickle and feckless stratum of society, which always finds it convenient to associate itself with success."

And there we will leave our "Putzi," having tea with the Führer.

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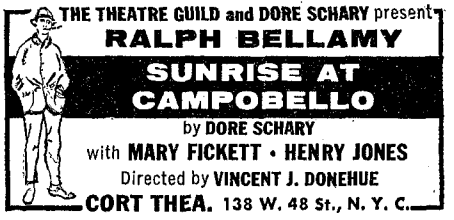
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Rural America

SMALL TOWN IN MASS SOCIETY. By ARTHUR J. VIDICH and JOSEPH BENSMAN. Princeton University Press. 329 pp. $6.00.

Reviewed by HARRIS DIENSTFREY

THE urban-rural dichotomy and all its variants and examples are the heritage of all of us. The metropolis and the town, the city slicker and the country hick, the city's excitement and the country's friendliness. They are part of our folklore, arts, and social science. David Riesman suggests that UPA's Mr. Magoo is the urban equivalent of Walt Disney's animals. And C. Wright Mills has shown that individuals with rural backgrounds often write the books on "social disorganization" of the city. As we learn more about the urban, we learn more about the rural; learning more about the rural, we learn more about the urban.

A township named Springdale in upstate

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New York. A community with no movie house, no super-market, and no outside industry, with a central high school that eliminated twenty-six independent school districts. A population of approximately 3,000, more than one-third of whom arrived between 1940 and 1952, about 1,000 of whom live in the village—prosperous farmers of the 40's and 50's, less successful, scarcity-oriented farmers of the 30's, independent businessmen, professionals, industrial workers, "aristocrats," and shack people. Arthur J. Vidich and Joseph Bensman's *Small Town in Mass Society* asks about the relations between this rural community and "modern, mass, industrial society." The average Springdaler, the authors report, says that the community can "avoid the problems inherent in city life," and its citizens can "select only the best parts": " 'we may have our own troubles, but it's nothing we can't handle by ourselves.' " But Vidich and Bensman outline the community's dependence, the outer world's multiple constraints; then, accepting the Springdaler's answer as the general truth of what once was, they ask a second question: How does the community integrate and its citizens adjust "in the face of social, institutional and cultural cleavages and conflicts which continuously threaten those social and cultural values which have served as bases of integration and adjustment in the past?"

Springdale sits in mass society like a sponge in water, its own structure permeated by the medium that surrounds it. Almost all working Springdalers depend on the outside—farmers on the Federal Milk Order, businessmen on both the mass distributors that determine price scales for commodities they sell and on the large retail outlets in near-by cities (the businessman's trade "becomes more limited to the aged, the loyal, the infirm and those who must buy on credit"); and one-third of the population, industrial and other wage workers, work outside Springdale. Politically, the community depends upon the state's highway construction and development programs and on its subsidies—"local assessment scales and tax rates are oriented to state equalization formulas." Springdale's village board "orients its action to the facilities and subsidies controlled and dispensed by other agencies and, by virtue of this, forfeits its own political power." In terms of life styles, those who are "favorably linked to the mass society" (i.e., are economically successful) and have the leisure for it, establish new styles; in this case, professionals set the style of consumption and socializing they learn from their city cousins. In addition, Springdalers not only depend upon the mass media for some entertainment and almost all information (the media have reduced "the local paper to reporting of social items and local news already known by everyone"), but they also derive their own self-image from the media's concept of small-town living. The fact that the composite media image does not indicate the industrial workers' place in a rural community, Vidich and Bensman write, hinders the community in giving them one.

Vidich and Bensman find one institution, religion, and one social process, secular leadership, that heal and hold the community. Religion "serves to accentuate and emphasize the public values of the community and to surround those values with a framework of church activity which further accentuates participation in and commitment to those values"; through the community's secular leaders "a wide range of community activities are coordinated simply because a small number of individuals are engaged in a wide range of leadership positions." Individuals, they write, repress inconvenient facts by refusing to generalize and, occasionally, by using impersonal forces to explain personal failures; others substitute goals and forget what they once called their future; a few behave and find their "solution" pathologically; most work or socialize hard to avoid themselves. "Life, then," *Small Town* ends, "consists in making an adjustment that is as satisfactory as possible within a world which is not often tractable to basic wishes and desires."

Small Town is exciting as it details this dialectic: mass society's impact on a rural community, the split it helps create between reality and ideology, then the devices that bridge the split. (Vidich and Bensman also discuss several reciprocal relations—for examples, the state and national vote and the farmer's participation at Congressional committee hearings.) All high school English texts that still offer urban students the rural picture of Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* should list *Small Town* as a more recent snapshot.

The analysis in *Small Town* offers some evidence for at least two hypotheses concerning the behavior of groups and individuals. Stated generally, the new, strong pressures on rural communities of a mass, industrial society tend to widen the distance between action and control for both individuals and groups. Sec-

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ondly, in an unstable world, they help cause types of competition and personal anxiety that are alien to the ideology of rural life. This is one way of discussing the relevance of *Small Town*—its "basic research" value.

SEVERAL statements in the book point to the problem of its immediate, "practical" value. "Politics, whatever the social and economic background of the groups involved, expresses itself through *individuals*." And: "Springdalers live in a world of rich and complicated values that are often determined by both the *local* and external societies and *their* major institutions." (Italics added in both quotations.) In other words, does the book describe its title, "small town in mass society," or does it describe Springdale in upstate New York? How much of Springdale's contradictions are the result of outside pressures, how much of them are just Springdale? Does the analysis of Springdale and the pressures of an industrial mass society's institutions apply to other communities?

Certainly the village's political surrender to mass society need not have been so complete, even within the framework of state subsidy. Vidich and Bensman themselves are surprised that "in politics, at least at the village level, the political perspective of the small businessman is the dominant one"—a perspective of low taxes and minimal expenditures, a perspective that in itself diminishes political action. They point out, too, that the high school principal, an outside expert hired by the school board, "represents a major force in remolding the community," not in the least way, by shifting the school's agriculturally weighted curriculum. The newspaper's reduced role, an additional factor in the political surrender, seems as much connected with its particular owners as with the media's supersession of its function. Historically, how much non-local news did the newspaper ever print? Again, with or without the counter forces of industrial mass society, did equality ever reign in Springdale?

Yet some outside control is quite definite: the Federal Milk Order, the state's highway construction programs, the subsidies, the community's occupational insufficiencies. And Springdale does not escape what Vidich and Bensman call "the ubiquity of the mass media." At least since the 1930's, when the Federal Milk Order became law, the town has had to react to new, strong pressures of a mass, industrial society. Obviously many communities have had to react to and live within the same kinds of pressures. In this careful study of Springdale, however, mass pressures seem to have interlocked with the community's own tendencies, but for examples of the complex relations between the new pressures and rural communities, this result does not mean that the mass media necessarily reinforce these trends or, more important, that all similar no-industry communities of about 3,000 population necessarily have similar tendencies. Nor do Vidich and Bensman say they do. They do claim that their study "views the community as a limited and finite universe in which one can examine in detail some of the major issues of modern American society."

Tardy Bildungsroman

SOME CAME RUNNING. By JAMES JONES. Scribner's. 1266 pp. $7.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT BRUSTEIN

JAMES JONES'S second novel is located in a mythical town in Illinois called Parkman. It is an attempt to interpret the lives of its representative citizens, the bums, lushes, and whores who inhabit its bars, the Rotarians who run its stores and banks, and the literati who preside over its intellectual life. Almost everybody is viewed through the central consciousness of Dave Hirsh, a writer who returns home after World War II and spends the four years covered by the novel striving both to write his great novel and find his great romance. Dave Hirsh and Parkman are in continual conflict and the book documents the hero's futile attempts to preserve his integrity and talents in a world largely alien and stupefying. Before being murdered by a madman, he comes to understand that the responsibilities of love and of the family corrode talent and that the writer must stubbornly refuse to participate in the conventional life of his culture. The book emphasizes, more openly than *From Here to Eternity*, Jones's central theme, that the only cause worth living and dying for is self-realization.

There is in *Some Came Running* the heavy drinking, brawling, and fornicating among the hangers-on at Smitty's bar that one found among the soldiers in the barracks at Schofield. Violence and drunkenness, though often used melodramatically, are sometimes for Jones a rich comic source—*Some Came Running* is

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proof that this source has not dried up. Two drunken brothers argue across a table about whether war is happy or sad and then beat each other to a pulp over the question; a sodden gladiator rises unsteadily to his feet and starts to explode over the tables, chairs, and glasses; two giant Southerners engage in hand to hand combat and then, after the walls shake, the floor quakes, the blood flows, and the bones break, shake hands and warmly re-establish their friendship. In scenes like this, mayhem achieves epic proportions which call to mind the roaring Boosters of the pioneer myth like Mike Fink and Roaring Ralph Stackpole. We believe in the physical prowess and the capacity for drinking and sex of Jones's characters just about as much as we believe that the ringtail roarer, "sockdoggling" Davy Crockett, broke three of his ribs, knocked out five of his teeth, and gouged out one of his eyes during their "riproarious fight on the Mississippi." They are all part of an ingratiating tall tale to which the reader willingly gives half assent.

It is a little disconcerting, therefore, to discover that Jones not only wants us to believe in these primitive wildmen but to see their lives as a noble alternative to the world of respectability. "The only way you could say it . . . was that the life they lived still had fist fights in it. . . . Every town had a group like that, living on the fringes, always within the law, always strictly within the law, not criminal, but at the same time not respectable. A little wild. It always did attract him. Probably mainly because the respectables always bored hell out of you, with their lies about themselves they'd convinced themselves of finally." The drunkards of Smitty's Bar bear a heavy burden in this book. In an America yielding to hypocrisy and decay, they are the last frontier of energy and honesty. It is clear that if Jones ever knew these people (and *From Here to Eternity* would indicate that he once knew them very well) he is now beginning to see them through a romantic haze. They have all become figures in his own recently constructed mythology of rebellion. It is no accident that the hero often thinks of these primitives as material for literature: "What a book these characters would make some day." They are no longer individuals but "characters" with an exemplary role to fill.

Some Came Running is the book Dave talks about, and it is a very bad book indeed, self-conscious, discursive, ineptly plotted, and clumsily written. Much of the book's shortcomings are the direct result of the quality of thought found among its pages. The reader is battered into helpless insensibility by Jones's analyses, explanations, theories, and opinions. The event exists to be universalized, the experience to be transmuted into a rigid philosophy of life. And what is the insight that explains the motions of the universe? Here it is: "It was really all only sex. All. Everything. The game and the profession of the universe. Money was made, and music written, books were written, statues, poems, governments fell. All. All for sex. Love me, love my horse." And the novel proves it. The hero makes a crucial decision to remain in Parkman and invest all his money in a business he despises because he wants to seduce the heroine; the heroine repulses the hero's advances because she is ashamed to admit she is still a virgin at thirty-seven; the hypocrisy of Parkman's upper class is exposed by wearying descriptions of their sexual peccadillos; even the act of writing itself is described as sex exhibitionism "like the man on the street who is under a compulsion to take his genitals out and show them to people."

This, of course, is the conception of the warm-blooded adolescent, so pulsing with sexual juice that all the world seems explained by his own desire. And much of *Some Came Running* reads like an elaborate adolescent romance. The reader is subjected to a series of solemn debates—which girls do and which girls don't and whether or not they like it, what their individual performances are like, what techniques should be used in seducing them—which reminds one of nothing so much as the high school locker room.

The hero, though he is thirty-seven when the novel begins, has the emotional responses of a child. Like a child, he sees himself as something special. Like a child, he feels that something beyond his control is preventing him from showing this to the world. The Gift and the Obstacle have appeared in Jones's work before. Prewitt, we will remember, was restrained from bugling by army officers who wanted him to fight in the ring. In this book, Dave is restrained from writing by his own need for sex, love, and affection. "If only a few of them would understand. If only *one* would! Well, write the book; make them understand. But understand *what*? Me! That's

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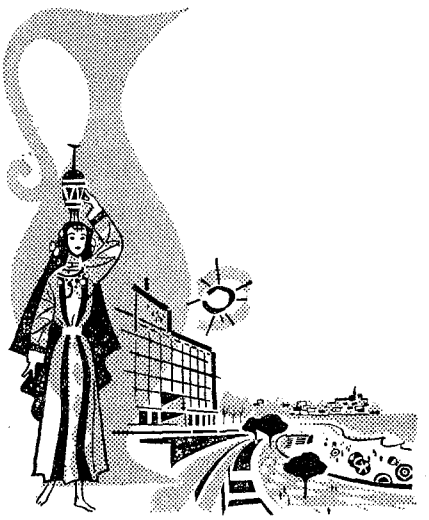
what! Dave Hirsh! Me, Dave Hirsh, that's what! To understand Dave Hirsh is to love him. What great brain once said that? Was it Einstein? Must have been. In love. In love. And at his age, too. Was he a punk? Was he a child? Apparently." Dave Hirsh's last insight is correct. This prose, with its plea for the world's understanding, is the prose of the willless juvenile trying to urge himself to independent action. The novel is a document of Hirsh's failure—instead of action, the plot is moved by misunderstandings and misconceptions. Things *happen* to Dave Hirsh; he is a hapless victim of circumstance, petulantly kicking against the pricks. While Prewitt's death resulted from his wilful refusal to compromise with the System, Dave Hirsh merely endures and dies gratuitously, for no reason at all. Despite Jones's efforts to relate Dave's passiveness to his artist's nature ("an outsider . . . doomed forever not to partake, only observe"), the hero emerges as helpless, irresponsible, and undisciplined, a frightened child in the world of men.

Consequently, it becomes difficult for the reader to take Jones's indictment of Parkman society seriously. Parkman's great sin is said to be hypocrisy, but more often it seems to be a refusal to take notice of Dave Hirsh when he cries for attention, like a parent's indifference to a son's great gifts. This is borne out by the fact that Dave stands in a filial relation to those few people who do give him attention and who do acknowledge his talent. The most ingratiating of these is 'Bama Dillert, an unregenerate professional gambler who cares tenderly for the hero after each of his collisions with life. 'Bama is very similar to Sergeant Warden of *From Here to Eternity* except that his affection for the hero is no longer disguised under a cloak of gruff indifference. Like Warden, 'Bama is characterized by his leadership, his unerring wisdom about human events, and the accuracy and grace with which he performs common tasks. In his relation to the hero, 'Bama seems more like father than friend. He represents the successful attainment of the hero's ideal, the rebel whose confidence and ability enable him to survive in the hostile world of men. He is an idealized father, possessing the parent's strength and surety without the parent's commitment to society.

Dave has two other parent figures—Bob and Gwen French, a father and daughter who are the leaders of Parkman's intellectual life.



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'Bama and his cohorts at Smitty's bar represent the truancy for which every adolescent rebel yearns; the Frenches represent the life of domestic stability, free from bourgeois complacency and hypocrisy, but nevertheless containing the security that the child finds at home. "He could not escape the sudden feeling that here suddenly for the first time in his life of thirty-seven years he had walked into a place that was safe. . . . God! to find a place like this in Parkman, Illinois. God, to find hips like this in Parkman, Illinois." Gwen French's hips (as we might expect considering her parental role) remain inaccessible to Dave Hirsh, but her advice does not. It is she who encourages him to return to writing, who gives his work direction, who finally gets it published, and who supplies him with most of his vapid literary theories. It is her father (a Midwestern poet who uses such expressions as "cad" and "rotter") who consoles him with Hindu philosophy when his love seems impossible. Gwen French, with her literary theories, and Bob French, with his Karma and occult studies, are probably the most frightful characters to appear in recent fiction.

The strong parental figures in Dave Hirsh's life nevertheless indicate that behind his rebellious nature and his hatred of respectability lies a blind worship of authority. While having the illusion of freedom and individualism, he has merely exchanged one orthodoxy for another. *From Here to Eternity* was both moving and comic because of the herculean efforts of its hero to fight the System; *Some Came Running* fails because the hero's resistance to the system has now been elevated into a philosophical principle. Jones's new determination to lay down doctrine is doubtless due to his inflated sense of his role as a novelist, a result of his first success. It is refreshing, at a time when mind has been banished from most literature, to find a novelist who is so respectful of intellect—but it forces us to evaluate Jones on the quality of his thought. That quality is not so much inferior as underdeveloped; we could take Jones's criticisms of life much more seriously if we could feel they were based on a mature understanding of life. As it is, *Some Came Running* emerges as a kind of tardy *Bildungsroman* in which the hero learns at forty-one what made Stephen Daedalus so unloved and unloving at twenty-one. It is evidence that, in a culture which deifies the adolescent, the emotional education of the individual is taking longer and longer to pursue.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

LUCY S. DAWIDOWICZ is on the staff of the American Jewish Committee.

DAN JACOBSON'S new novel, *The Price of Diamonds*, has just been published by Knopf.

R. H. S. CROSSMAN, M.P., has long been prominent as an author and public figure.

HARRIS DIENSTFREY, a graduate of the University of Chicago, is now serving as an enlisted man in the U.S. Army.

ROBERT BRUSTEIN'S article, "America's New Culture Hero," published in the February number of COMMENTARY, has occasioned much comment.

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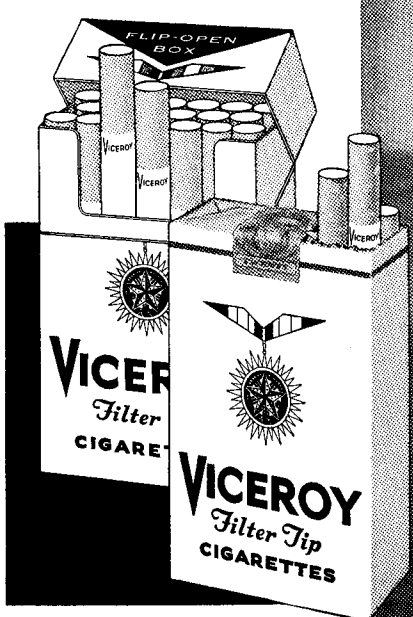

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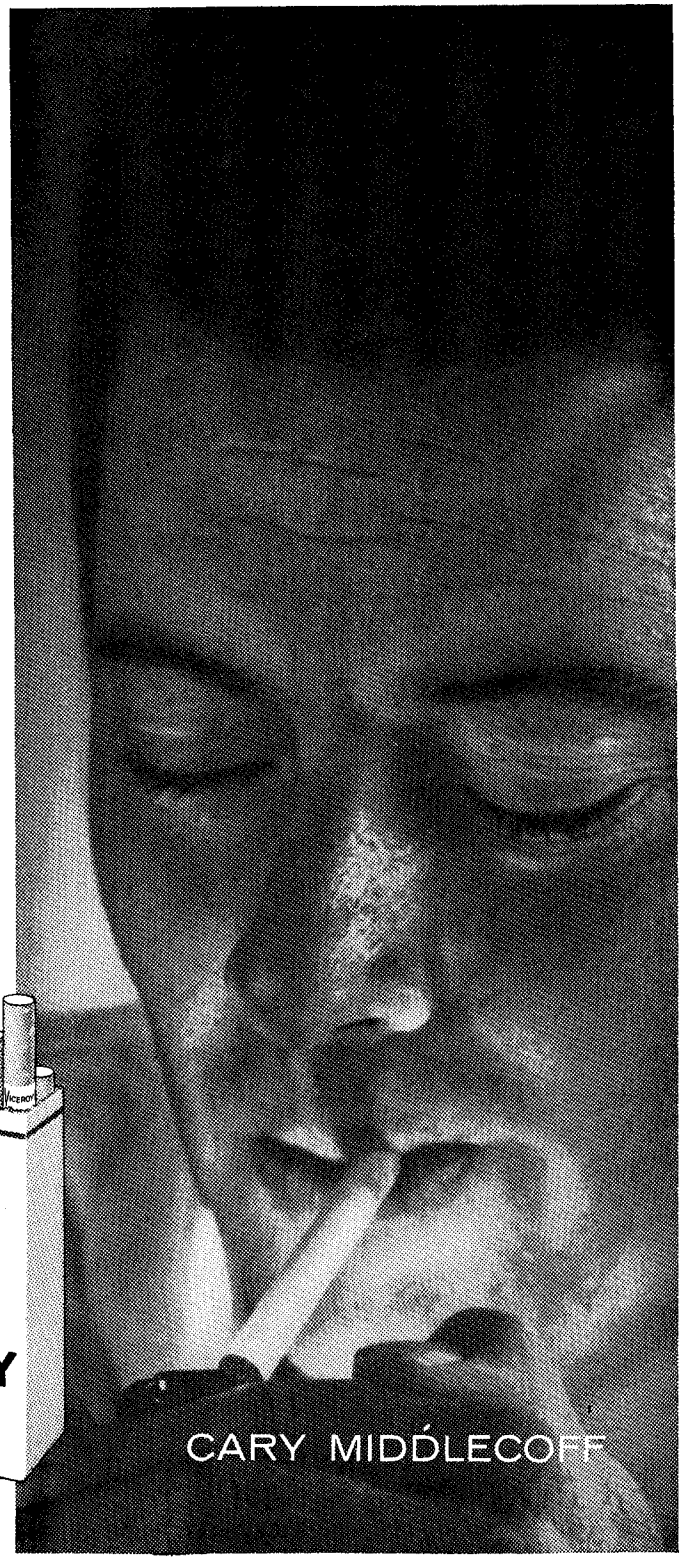

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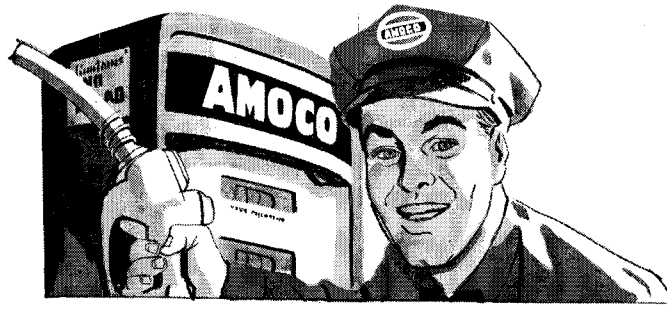

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